

**Ephesians 1: 16 – 19**

NLT

<sup>16</sup>I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly,<sup>17</sup> asking God, glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. <sup>18</sup>I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. <sup>19</sup>I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power

**The Journey Ahead Group (JAG)  
Report and Recommendation to Session  
March 18, 2018**

**Introduction**

The Journey Ahead Group was formed by the Valley Presbyterian Church Session in April of 2017. The charge of the group is:

“To review, to study, to process the work of all committees and groups in the church, and to recommend to Session the possible actions that need to take place in the sustainability and effectiveness of Valley Presbyterian Church.”

There was an underlying belief that there are long-existing “unhealthy behaviors” within the Church. The group works by consensus with the Transitional Pastor facilitating the meetings. At the time of this report the group has six members from the VPC congregation.

**Information Gathering**

The group spent seven months gathering information. In summary, the group interviewed:

- Congregants at public forums held at the Church from September through January.
- Letters from home bound members.
- Current and former pastors.
- The Session.
- The Deacons.
- The Support Staff individually.
- The Choir.
- The Personnel Committee.
- The Finance Committee.
- The Presbytery’s Administrative Commission.
- The Mission Committee
- The Faith Formation Committee

Thank you to Reverend Medina for showing us: *Grace for the Journey - Practices and Possibilities for In-between Times*, Beverly A. Thompson and George B. Thompson, Jr. - The Alban Institute, Publication 2011.

It helped us to understand the lifecycle of all churches and the importance of “in between times”, why the process can’t be rushed. It instilled the patience needed to discern God’s intent for VPC.

### ***Praises and Joys***

VPC has much to be proud of. We were constantly impressed by the outreach and good done by the Church and its members. Valley's original mission "To know Christ and make Him known through word and deed" is certainly being fulfilled.

Predominant praises we heard were:

- The diverse Music Ministry.
- "The warm and friendly nature of the Congregation."
- The inspiration produced through excellent worship services.
- The support by Stephen Ministers, The Deacons and the Network of Caring.
- The opportunities for faith formation.
- The Women's Ministry.
- The Kettle Dinners.
- Extensive opportunity for involvement.
- The beautiful sanctuary.
- The Patio Sale and the income generated for mission programs.
- The wonderful job done by the custodians and non-pastoral staff.
- Outreach such as extended communion, services away from the Church and the Valley Galley.

### ***Issues and Concerns***

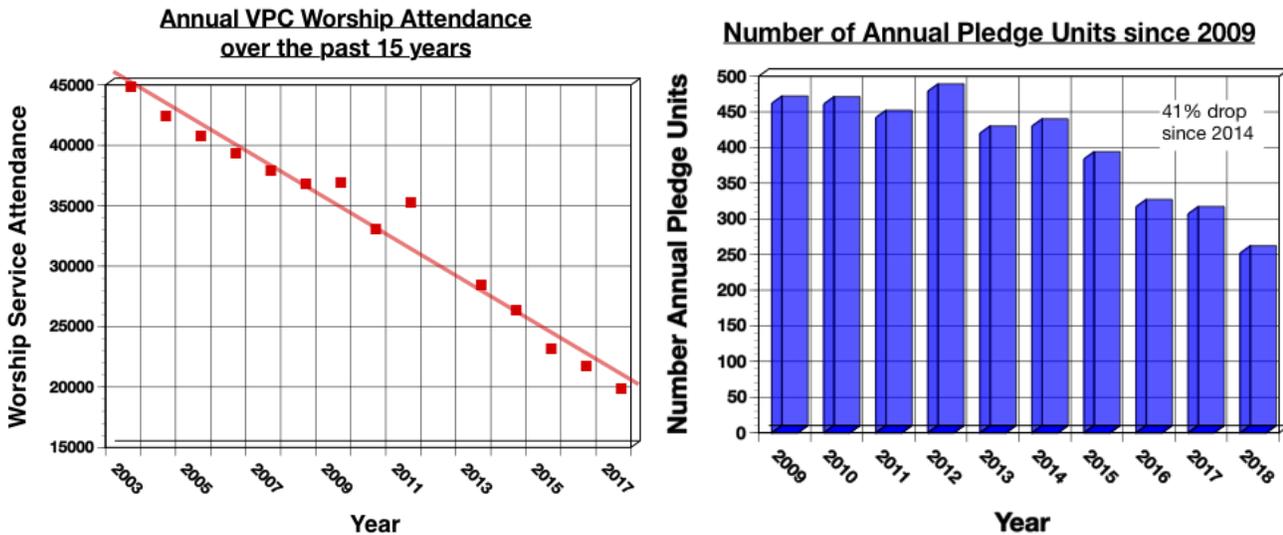
A number of issues and concerns were expressed repeatedly:

- Presbyterian Church governance is unique. It is estimated that less than half of the members of Valley Presbyterian Church had any experience with Presbyterian governance prior to joining.
  - Many expressed concern that VPC has a long history of groups being very active and vocal in unhealthy ways. Shadow power groups formed. These people were making major decisions outside of Session's authority. This developed because of a vacuum in effective leadership and a lack of trust of Session.
  - VPC has traditionally looked for Senior Pastors strong on sermon presentation and pastoral care. There is significant evidence that Valley has never had a Pastor with strong Church administration and management skills. In some instances this has led to a poor relationship between the support staff and certain groups within the Church.
  - A previous Pastor was extremely weak on understanding Church organization and how to manage it well. The abolishment of the Finance and Worship Committees contributed to an exodus of members from the Church including many leaders.
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- The training for Church Officers and Committee Members was insufficient in the approximate period 2010-2016. This led to ineffective leadership and lack of cooperation between Session and the Deacons as well as other groups.
- Within Valley Presbyterian Church, information seems to have become a source of power that in many cases turns into part of the small group inappropriate behavior. There is a perception that the complete truth is never told. Thus complete openness and trust is an issue.

**Major Categories of Concern – Discussion and Recommendations for Improvement**

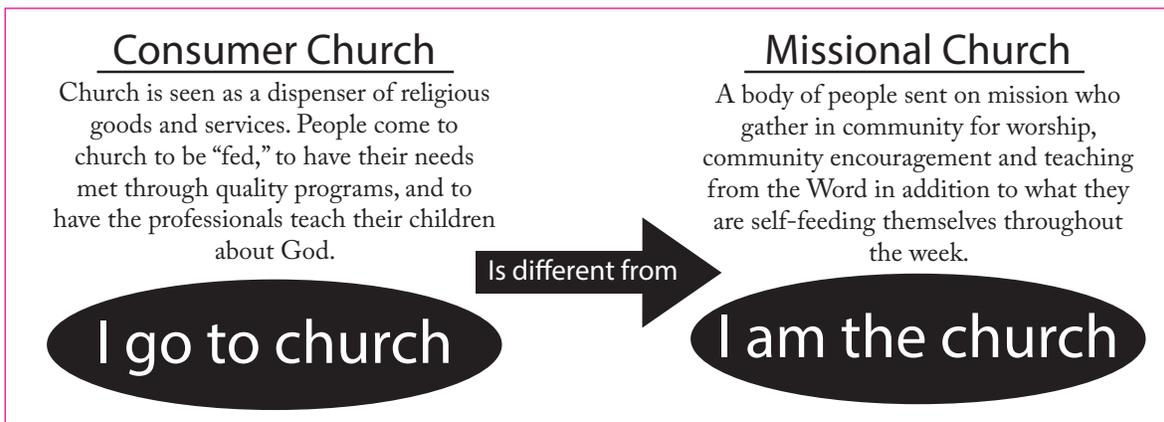
All mainstream Protestant churches are facing growth and sustainability issues. Two alarming Valley Presbyterian metrics are shown in the plots below.



Valley’s performance is not significantly different from many other mainline Churches. Some of our decline in these metrics can be attributed to decisions made by the General Assembly.

Many of the principles that have supported the Church and Christianity itself over the years are being challenged or altered. A local Church can no longer be everything to everyone. Focus is necessary. A congregation must decide what it wants to be and not lose sight of that goal.

The figure below describes two common types of churches, a Consumer Church and a Missional Church.



Many Churches, including Valley Presbyterian, often try to operate in both arenas depending on the situation at hand. It may be impossible to operate on only one side of the arrow 100% of the time, but intentional decisions can be made. (See Appendices E and F for additional information on Missional Churches.)

Revisiting the Church's mission statement, especially after 40 years of use, is an excellent idea.

**Recommendation 1:** — Valley Presbyterian Church will strive to become a Missional Church.

**Recommendation 2:** — Valley Presbyterian Church adopt a new mission statement with the following principles:

To make Christ known through reconciliation while communicating respect and love to all people.

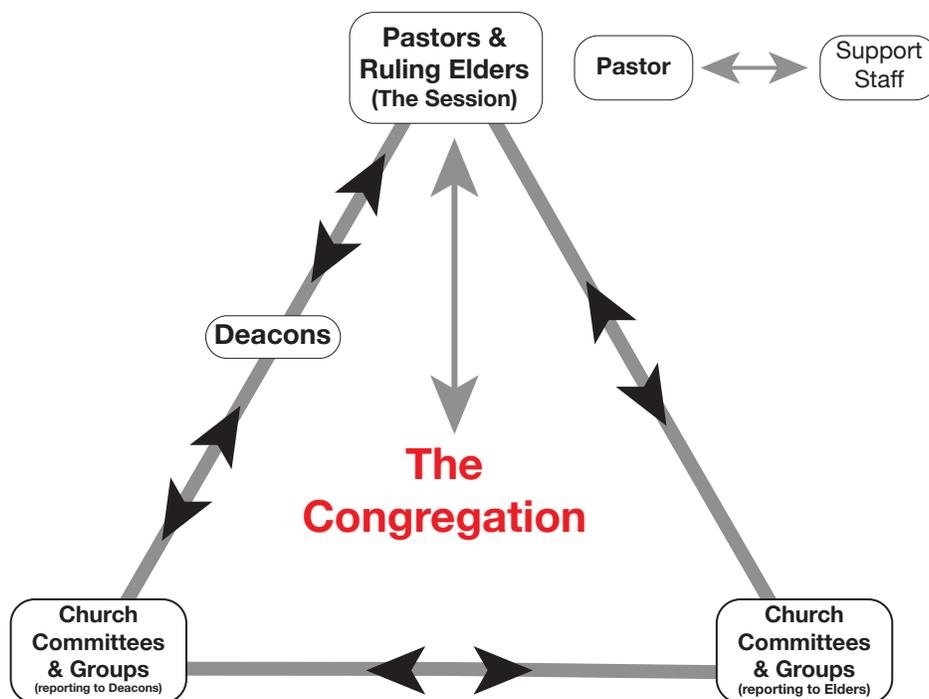
The principles we will follow to accomplish this are:

- Worship that glorifies God.
- Growing our faith in love, hope and the peace of Christ.
- Caring for the children of God.
- Reaching out to the community and the world.
- Seeking an attitude of servant-hood.

To achieve transitioning to the Missional Church and the new Mission Statement eleven major areas have been identified where the Church needs to seek improvement. These are:

### **Open Communication**

#### **What Ideal Communications at VPC should look like**



The flow chart shows what ideal Church communications would look like at Valley Presbyterian. During our forums we repeatedly heard credible testimony that several of the communications lines were either missing or inadequate during critical periods in the Church's history.

Good communication within the Church is the responsibility of every member. JAG can make recommendations of ways to improve this important area; however, a higher level of communications effectiveness must be the goal of all.

### **Recommendation 3: (approved with an amendment to form a Communication Task Force.)**

- **Communication between Deacons and Ruling Elders.**
  - A meeting between the two groups several times per year to discuss programs and issues.
  - A Deacon be assigned to attend every Session Meeting.
  - An Elder be assigned to attend every Deacon meeting.
- **Communication between Elders and the Congregation.**
  - Emphasize and enhance current lines of communication such as The Valley Voice, eBlast, our website, our Facebook page, Grapevine and Congregational meetings.
  - Develop a better mailing list to send periodic updates to those without internet access. This is particularly important for our “part-time in residence members.”
  - An avenue of communication must be established for congregation members to express their concerns, suggestions, or compliments to Session.
- **Communication between Support Staff and Elders.**
  - A Ruling Elder will attend a Church staff meeting at least once per month.
- **Training for Ruling Elders, Deacons and Committee Chairs should stress communication that is healthy, focused and respectful of all participants.**

### **Conflict Resolution**

Improper conflict resolution may be the single biggest issue the Journey Ahead Group has identified at Valley. Improved communications will help with conflict resolution, but other strong measures are required.

**Recommendation 4: (approved with amendment)** Adopt “Seeking to Be Faithful - Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement” (PCUSA Appendix C) as a working document to become part of:

- **All ongoing Church Officer training.**
- **General Congregational education.**

Better conflict resolution must become the norm at Valley! Session responsibility going forward should put high emphasis on identifying other good sources of conflict resolution training!

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## **Power Dynamics**

Poor communications and improper conflict resolution lead to improper power dynamics. These are the power dynamic “snapshots” JAG has determined from our interviews:

The main power dynamic within the life of VPC has been centered primarily on the Pastor/Head of Staff. Due to the size and decline of the Congregation, the role of the Pastor/Head of Staff is changing.

**Recommendation 5:** The Session should thoroughly review the role of the Pastor/Head of Staff at Valley.

**Recommendation 6:** The Pastor/Head of Staff should have a good understanding of Family Systems.

**Recommendation 7:** The Pastor should be well versed in conflict management and triangulation.

**Recommendation 8:** The Pastor should maintain a good sense of personal and professional boundaries.

The power dynamic of the Associate Pastor has been one of support for the Pastor. They are also responsible for their primary areas of ministry.

**Recommendation 9:** The Session should thoroughly review the role of the Associate Pastor at Valley.

**Recommendation 10:** The Associate Pastor should have a good understanding of Family Systems.

**Recommendation 11:** The Associate Pastor should be well versed in conflict management and triangulation.

**Recommendation 12:** The Associate Pastor should maintain a good sense of personal and professional boundaries.

The power dynamic of the Congregation has at times turned into “shadow groups” making major decisions outside the Session responsibility. Lack of open communications allowed these groups to have exclusive access to knowledge/information that emboldens them to act inappropriately.

**Recommendation 13: (approved with amendment)** The Congregation needs to be informed/educated/taught the proper channel of communication and reinforcing accountability.

The power dynamic of the Session was weakened by poor training and poor leadership. They were paralyzed and broke into factions around particular issues and individuals. Better Session training has helped, but much more work in this area is necessary.

**Recommendation 14:** Promote effective communication throughout the Church.

The power dynamic of the Deacons was minimized and marginalized into support activities not relevant to traditional Deacon activities. It fell far short of proper Deacon responsibility. Deacons were treated as second-rate Church Officers.

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**Recommendation 15: Implement the Congregational Care Transition Team's efforts and strategy.**

The power dynamic of the Support Staff has traditionally sought too much authority and involvement in the Church operation. This is an ongoing pattern that must be corrected.

**Recommendation 16: Require frequent reorientation on specific responsibilities of Support Staff. Recognize the Support Staff at least annually through the Personnel Committee.**

The power dynamic of many members at Valley Presbyterian Church, who previously held powerful and influential positions, has overly influenced the decision making process within the Church. Their skills and talents can be very helpful and beneficial to VPC.

**Recommendation 17: They need to be encouraged to adopt a servant leadership model; work in collaboration with others for the benefit of the whole Congregation.**

**Recommendation 18: The pastor should, in consultation with others, identify these people and recognize that they bring a potential natural bias due to their backgrounds.**

The power dynamic of retired and other clergy who attend Valley is a blessing.

**Recommendation 19: Their skills and talents should be utilized for positive growth within VPC.**

**Recommendation 20: Insure that they maintain their boundaries of professional ethics.**

**Recommendation 21: They should avoid any appearance or perception of influencing the internal workings of the Church or the Pastoral Staff and Support Staff.**

### **Leadership**

The Pastor/Head of Staff has constantly been and is under attack by members of the Congregation and Support Staff.

**Recommendation 22: Intentional training for Session, Deacons, and all Committee Chairs so they are better equipped to handle their responsibilities. This should include, but not be limited to:**

- Required training in Conflict Management.
- Required training in Effective Listening.
- All committees are accountable to Session.

**Recommendation 23: That the leadership qualities in the document "Leadership Competencies/Qualities" (PCUSA Appendix D) for our next Pastor be:**

- A. Self Differentiation (we stress this is most important)
  - B. Willingness to Engage Conflict
  - C. Preaching and Worship Leadership
  - D. Spiritual Maturity
  - E. Teacher
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We also suggest the following competencies/qualities for the next Pastor:

- F. Organizational Agility
- G. Communicator
- H. Collaboration

**Recommendation 24:** To identify and develop new leadership within the Church.

### ***Congregational Care***

The work of the Congregation Care Transition Team (CCTT) is strongly endorsed by the Journey Ahead Group. This effort is to strengthen the entire Pastoral Care and Compassion Ministry at Valley.

**Recommendation 25:** There must be intentional training in all areas of care through the CCTT.

### ***Financial***

Session has stewardship responsibility over Valley's financial resources including insuring a balanced budget. In the past the Finance Committee has usurped the Session's power. The Session and the Finance Committee must work together.

**Recommendation 26:** The Finance Committee needs to establish internal control procedures for approval of committee requests for funds. Vouchers should be approved by the chair-persons of Committees or designee.

### ***Mission***

Mission has always been a strong outreach of Valley Presbyterian Church.

**Recommendation 27:** The Mission Committee should thoroughly inform the congregation on mission giving by source – VPC operating budget, net patio sale proceeds, mission breakfasts and members “designated giving” to support specific missions sponsored by VPC.

**Recommendation 28:** The Mission Committee should evaluate the number of missions currently supported as to whether financial support should be allocated among fewer agencies, allowing for a larger impact on those chosen.

**Recommendation 29:** Evaluate the longterm viability of the Patio Sale.

### ***Faith Formation***

Faith Formation at Valley is already one of our strengths.

**Recommendation 30:** Support developing programs and interfaith opportunities on a regular basis as well as ongoing classes on Presbyterian governance.

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When we spoke with the Faith Formation Committee, they were highly positive and suggested several excellent ideas:

- An interfaith class as a possibility for growth. 8-10 years ago we had a spectacular example of this. Could we become a leader again? The group would be based out of VPC with trips to other churches.
- Videotaping services for shut-ins and travelers.
- Additional information on pew pass-down form. Get more information and react quicker on it.

We should also be intentional about developing small groups as a way of pulling more members into active involvement in the life of the church.

**Recommendation 31: Expand the pool of gifted teachers with Valley including seasonal residents.**

### ***Personnel***

Personnel plays a critical role in facilitating the work and ministry of the Church.

**Recommendation 32: Develop a staffing model that supports a balanced budget beginning in 2019 and fulfills the Church's new Mission Statement.**

**Recommendation 33: Session should consider the following staffing model and direct the Personnel Committee to determine whether the positions are full-time, part-time, hourly or virtual:**

- **1 Pastor/Head of Staff**
- **1 Associate Pastor**
- **1 Executive Secretary**
- **3 Custodians**
- **1 Director of Music**
- **1 Administrative Specialist**
- **1 Bookkeeper**
- **1 Media and IT Liaison**
- **1 Parish Nurse**

**Recommendation 34: Session should also explore alternative staffing options, such as the utilization of retired pastors, Seminary interns, and lay persons.**

### ***Trust***

In our interviews with the Congregation there was and is a perception of lack of trust, especially with the completeness and openness of sharing of information.

**Recommendation 35: Strive to foster a climate of trust through open and intentional communication which will lead to understanding and respect.**

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## **Worship**

During our research we continually found strong praise for our Worship Services. This cannot be emphasized enough.

We commend the Music Program for the beautiful ways in which the Worship experience is enhanced by their participation. We commend our present Director of Music for the passion, devotion and skill that he brings to the Music program here at Valley.

**Recommendation 36: Explore live video streaming of the Worship Service(s) with prior services stored on the Church Website for delayed viewing.**

## **In Summary**

The adoption by the Session of the recommendations within this report will help us move ahead in becoming a more viable, sustainable and effective Congregation serving Christ in this Community. It is our belief that this action will be a large initial step towards demonstrating leadership, building trust and opening effective communications.

**Recommendation 37:** The Journey Ahead Group's consensus is that the content of this complete report should be made available to the Congregation of Valley Presbyterian Church. We recommend its release before seasonal visitors depart mid-Spring. It should then be placed on the Church website.

**Recommendation 38:** The final report will be added to the Session minutes and records.

Report prepared and presented by the Session authorized Journey Ahead Group (JAG)

Peggi Briggs  
Sandy Clark  
Richard Horn  
Steve Larson

Marcia MacDonald  
Jim Rusk  
Liz Haines, emeritus  
John Wood, emeritus

Reverend Mark Medina, Facilitator

**In the words of a former Valley Presbyterian Church Visitation Pastor, in his book *From Pulpit to Pew: The writings of Fred Stillwell Morrison*, "being part of a congregation is not a spectator sport."**

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*Appendix C – Guidelines for Disagreement (PCUSA)*

***Seeking to be Faithful Together:***  
**Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement**

In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will...

<p><b>G</b>ive them a hearing... listen before we answer</p> <p><i>John 7:51 and Proverbs 18:13</i></p>	<p><b>1 Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– we will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange,</li> <li>– we will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.</li> </ul> <p><b>2 Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.</b></p> <p><b>3 State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.</b></p>
<p><b>S</b>peak the truth in love</p> <p><i>Ephesians 4:15</i></p>	<p><b>4 Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus’ teachings.</b></p> <p><b>5 Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people’s motives, intelligence or integrity;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– we will not engage in name-calling or labelling of others prior to, during, or following the discussion.</li> </ul> <p><b>6 Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.</b></p>
<p><b>M</b>aintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace</p> <p><i>Ephesians 4:3</i></p>	<p><b>7 Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.</b></p> <p><b>8 Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– we will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.</li> </ul> <p><b>9 Follow these additional guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously;</li> <li>– seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;</li> <li>– be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience;</li> <li>– abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with these Guidelines.</li> </ul> <p><b>10 Include our disagreement in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God’s grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.</b></p>

## *Appendix C – Guidelines for Disagreement (Continued)*

**A**s Presbyterians, we are called to work for the “peace, unity and purity of the Church” (Book of Order) as we seek to be faithful to God’s work in the world. However, disagreements and conflicts are inevitable in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as we try to be faithful. They exist within committees, congregations, presbyteries, synods, at General Assemblies and in the national life of the denomination.

Conflicts are inevitable in all of life and certainly in the church. The history of the church is filled with conflicts and disagreements. Several of Paul’s letters address the conflicts which were common in the early church. There have been and are going to be disagreements as Christians attempt to discern God’s work in the world and as we interpret scripture.

Conflicts can be harmful and even destructive. They can cause individuals a great deal of pain and the community of faith immeasurable damage. Congregations have been divided; denominations have experienced schisms.

At the same time, conflicts can be an opportunity for new insights, learning, and individual and corporate growth. Disagreements can illuminate a topic in helpful ways and can present solutions to problems which previously had not been seen. The successful resolution of conflict can also bind people together in a powerful way.

The Bible contains many stories of conflict and disagreement and much advice about how they can be addressed. As those stories indicate, God is already present wherever there is brokenness, granting wholeness and peace. God promises to be with us in times of disagreement and calls us to reconciliation, trust, love and forgiveness.

We realize that our perspectives are limited, so to help us affirm each other, enhance our community, stay open to the viewpoints of others and be sensitive to cultural diversity, we commit ourselves to the Guidelines in a spirit of prayer, trust, and love, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

*Adopted by the 204<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1992) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

## Questions and answers about the Guidelines for use by sessions and congregations

### **1 What are the Guidelines and how did they come about?**

“Seeking To Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement” is a response to requests from many Presbyterian congregations which have experienced pain and brokenness resulting from disagreements that were not dealt with in a healthy and productive way. Some of these disagreements were about issues important in our national life (e.g. abortion and human sexuality), while some of them were about matters dealing with the life of the congregation (e.g. should we start a building campaign?).

Every congregation has conflicts. They will either be occasions for divisiveness and harm or they will provide opportunities for growing and learning. The Guidelines may help congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) use conflict in a creative and productive way.

## *Appendix C – Guidelines for Disagreement (Continued)*

The 204<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1992) adopted the Guidelines for its own life and provided this tool to congregations and the other bodies of the Presbyterian Church to help them deal with the inevitable conflicts and disagreements which occur.

### **2 What is the biblical basis for the Guidelines?**

The Bible contains many stories of conflict and offers a great deal of guidance for dealing with disagreements. It is also rich in its description of God's peacegiving and reconciling work.

- God, through Jesus Christ is reconciling the world and gives us the ministry of reconciliation. (II Corinthians 5:17-20)
- We are one body. (I Corinthians 10:7)
- We are called to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3)
- Make peace with your brother and sister when you have a conflict. (Matthew 5:23-24)
- Bless those who persecute you; live in harmony with one another. (Romans 12:14-16)
- Be kind to one another and forgive one another. (Ephesians 4:13-16)
- Listen carefully before you speak. (Proverbs 18:13)
- Speak the truth in love. (Ephesians 4:13-16)
- Work for consensus. (Acts 15:1-31)

### **3 Why should your session and congregation agree to use the Guidelines?**

Conflicts and disagreements occur in congregations. Where there are people who care deeply, there is bound to be conflict.

The Guidelines offer clear, simple suggestions for dealing with differences, so they become occasions for growing in grace and understanding, not times of divisiveness and separation. Though use of the Guidelines cannot prevent conflict from happening, they might help develop an open, helpful climate where differences are dealt with productively.

### **4 What are some suggested steps for considering the use of the Guidelines in your congregation?**

- **Leadership**...Ask a committee of session or several elders to lead the session in a study of the Guidelines.
- **Bible Study**...Suggest that an adult church school class or Bible study group study the biblical insights on conflict and what to do about it. It would also be useful if the session would have their own similar study. One resource you might use is *Behold the New Has Come: Peacemaking in Corinthians* (DMS 225-90-202; 75 cents, phone 800-524-2612).
- **Skill Building Sessions**...If the session has not recently used a portion of their meetings for learning skills for dealing with conflict, consider using and adapting this resource. Also consider using this resource in your adult education program.
- **Study the Guidelines**...Ask the session to study the Guidelines by examining each one of them. The session might ask these questions about each Guideline:
  - How might the use of this Guideline help create a healthy atmosphere for dealing with conflict?
  - How might the use of this Guideline help deal with an existing conflict?
  - Would you like to change this Guideline or remove it from the list?

## *Appendix C – Guidelines for Disagreement (Continued)*

- **Vote on the Guidelines...**The session might vote to use the Guidelines in its own life and to encourage and help members of the congregation make use of them. The session might also wish to overture the presbytery to agree to use the Guidelines for its life together. Ask a committee of the session to help the session and the congregation make use of the Guidelines.
- **Report to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program...**Please tell the Peacemaking Program if your session agrees to use the Guidelines, about your experience with them, and other efforts to deal with conflict and disagreement.

### **5 How can our session actually use the Guidelines?**

Once your session has agreed to use the Guidelines, there are several ways they might be used:

- Encourage all members of the session to take responsibility for using the Guidelines during the meeting.
- Urge session members to use the Guidelines and remind others to use them during informal conversations in the congregation.
- Read a simple prayer together prior to the start of the session meeting which asks God's help in dealing with conflict effectively.

One possible prayer:

*Gracious and Loving God, You have called us together to do the work of Your church. Be present with us during this meeting, guide us that we may make decisions that will reflect Your loving presence in this world. Create within us open minds and hearts, that we will not fear conflict or run from it, but embrace it, knowing that it is an opportunity for growing in faith and a fuller understanding of Your will for us. Help us to listen to each other, share our thoughts in loving, honest ways and do all we can to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.*

- Pray before voting on a matter which has created significant disagreement, reminding all present that some will be happy about the decision and some will be disappointed.
- Use the Guidelines in ways which encourage open candid discussion. Discourage using the Guidelines in ways which would stifle the sharing the disagreements and impede session members from sharing their opinions.
- Display the Guidelines poster in the rooms where the session and other committees meet.
- Review and evaluate the session's use of the Guidelines each year. Help each new class of the session understand the Guidelines and their use.

### **6 How can the Guidelines be used in our congregation?**

- Reproduce the first page of this form and include it in a Sunday bulletin or in your congregation's newsletter in an effort to give copies to as many members as possible.
- Display the Guidelines poster on several of your church's bulletin boards.
- Present the Guidelines to the committees of session, other committees, the choir, Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Men and the youth fellowships.
- Invite members of these groups and other leaders in your congregation to a training session on the Guidelines. Use some of the resources listed on the back page of this brochure in the training session.
- Include training on the Guidelines in new member classes and officer training classes.

## *Appendix C – Guidelines for Disagreement (Continued)*

- Ask the worship committee of session to work with the pastor to find ways that the Guidelines might be emphasized in worship.
- At a congregational meeting, ask the congregation to decide if they will use the Guidelines.
- If a congregation votes to use the Guidelines, consider having an evaluation annually at a congregational meeting on how effectively the congregation has used them. This evaluation might produce suggestions for using them better.

### **7 Why inform the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program of any actions taken by your session on the Guidelines, as well as your experience and your concerns?**

The information received by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program will help it and perhaps the General Assembly evaluate the Guidelines and their use. This information may lead to the strengthening of this tool and the development of resources which will help congregations use the Guidelines.

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program will send information about new resources and other assistance to congregations which are using the Guidelines as well as good ideas and suggestions received from other congregations.

## *Appendix D – Leadership Competencies and Qualities (PCUSA)*

### **Church Leadership Connection Leadership Competencies Definitions**

<b>THEOLOGICAL/SPIRITUAL INTERPRETER</b>	
<b>Compassionate</b> – having the ability to suffer with others; being motivated by others pain and is called into action as advocate; is motivated by caring for others while concurrently keeping the organizational goals clearly in focus.	<b>Hopeful</b> – maintains stability in the moment and hope for the future; provides direction, guidance, and faith when describing basic needs; and helps followers to see a way through chaos and complexity.
<b>Preaching and Worship Leadership</b> – is a consistently effective preacher and worship leader; is able to inspire from the pulpit; communicates a clear and consistent message through sermons that are carefully prepared and artfully delivered; projects the identity and character of the congregation through worship leadership presence.	<b>Spiritual Maturity</b> - shows strong personal depth and spiritual grounding; demonstrates integrity by walking the talk and by responding with faithfulness of purpose; is seen by others as trustworthy and authentic; nurtures a rich spiritual life; seeks the wisdom and guidance of appropriate mentors; is able to articulate a clear and consistent theology.
<b>Lifelong Learner</b> – individuals who use every experience in life as a potential tool for growth; one who pursues continuing education; and those who build on strengths and seek assistance to improve weaknesses.	<b>Teacher</b> – creates learning environments where students are active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative groups; designs lesson plans that teach concepts, facts, and theology; effectively uses multiple learning tools to reach a wide variety of learners; revises instructional strategies based upon ministry/organization context.
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	
<b>Communicator</b> - advances the abilities of individuals and the organizations through active listening supported with meaningful oral and written presentation of information.	<b>Bilingual</b> – having the ability to use two languages, especially with equal or nearly equal fluency; able to use multiple languages in communication.
<b>Public Communicator</b> - demonstrates a comfortable ease when speaking in a variety of settings (both small and large groups); is effective at addressing a variety of topics; can get messages across with the desired effect.	<b>Media Communicator</b> - has experience developing materials for a variety of written or multimedia forms of communications (print, Internet-based, social media, etc.)
<b>Technologically Savvy</b> - the ability to navigate successfully the world of technology using software, blogging, multi-media, and websites as tools for ministry.	
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP</b>	
<b>Advisor</b> – an individual others turn to for counsel and guidance; provides coaching; expertise for congregations or other organizations.	<b>Change Agent</b> – having the ability to lead the change process successfully; anchoring the change in the congregation’s/organization’s vision and mission.
<b>Contextualization</b> – the ability to assess accurately the context, environment, history, relationships and uniqueness of a congregation or organization.	<b>Culturally Proficient</b> – having solid understanding of the norms, values and common behaviors of various peoples, including direct experience working in multiple cultural and cross-cultural settings.

*Appendix D – Leadership Competencies and Qualities (Continued)*

<p><b>Externally Aware</b> - identifies and keeps informed of the polity of the church and/or the organization; maintains current with laws, regulations, policies, procedures, trends, and developments both internally and in the larger society.</p>	<p><b>Entrepreneurial</b> - leaders that are creative in using resources; identifies opportunities to develop; is willing to take risks, initiates actions that involve a deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage.</p>
<p><b>Risk Taker</b> – persons with the ability to take appropriate risk to accomplish needed goals; one who thinks outside the box and who is not afraid of challenging the status-quo.</p>	<p><b>Task Manager</b> - assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization; holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities; can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget; and monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Willingness to Engage Conflict</b> - steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities; reads situations quickly; good at focused listening; can identify common ground and elicit cooperation from others in crafting mutual solutions.</p>	<p><b>Decision Making</b> - makes effective decisions, balancing analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment; is aware of the long term implications of choices made; is generally regarded as offering solutions and suggestions that are correct and effective.</p>
<p><b>Organizational Agility</b> - is astute about how congregations and/or organizations work; knows how to get things done through formal and informal channels; understands the importance of supporting good policy, practice, and procedure; appreciates the power in the culture of a congregation; is politically savvy.</p>	<p><b>Strategy and Vision</b> - sees ahead clearly, keeping focused on the larger picture; can anticipate future consequences and trends accurately; is future oriented; casts a compelling and inspired vision for a preferred future; sees possibility; crafts breakthrough strategies.</p>
<p><b>Financial Manager</b> – deliver results by maximizing organizational effectiveness and sustainability through the best use of available financial resources; allocates and manages finances transparently; implements strategies to achieve operational efficiencies and value for money; puts in place rigorous and comprehensive financial accountability systems.</p>	<p><b>Funds Developer</b> – maintains the ability to solicit donations used to fund the budget of the organization; effectively expresses the needs for funds to potential donors; responsible for adding new potential donors to the organization's contact list; prepares statement of planned activities and enlists support for mission initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b> - has a natural orientation toward getting people to work together; shares wins and successes; fosters open dialogue; lets people finish and be responsible for their work; creates strong feelings of belonging among group members; is a good judge of talent and can accurately assess the strengths and limitations of others.</p>	
<p><b>INTERPERSONAL ENGAGEMENT</b></p>	
<p><b>Interpersonal Engagement</b> - displays a consistent ability to build solid relationships of trust and respect inside and outside of the organization; engage people, organizations, and partners in developing goals, executing plans, and delivering results; use negotiation skills and adaptability to encourage recognition of joint concerns, collaboration, and to influence the success of outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Bridge Builder</b> – possessing a certain responsibility for the unity of the congregation and or organization; works to connect people of different cultures, worldviews, and theological positions.</p>
<p><b>Motivator</b> - creates and sustains an organizational culture which permits others to provide the quality of service essential to high performance. Enables others to acquire the tools and support they need to perform well; and influences others toward a spirit of service and meaningful contributions to mission</p>	<p><b>Personal Resilience:</b> learns from adversity and failure; picks up on the need to change personal, interpersonal, and leadership behaviors; deals well with ambiguity; copes effectively with change; can decide and act without having the total picture; comfortably handles risk and uncertainty; seeks feedback; expresses personal regret when appropriate</p>

*Appendix D – Leadership Competencies and Qualities (Continued)*

	accomplishment.	
	<b>Initiative</b> - demonstrates ambition is highly motivated; is action oriented and full of energy for things seen as challenging; seizes opportunity; pushes self and others to achieve desired results.	<b>Flexibility</b> - adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, unexpected obstacles, or ambiguity; remains open to new ideas and approaches; and works concurrently on related and conflicting priorities without losing focus or attention.
	<b>Self Differentiation</b> - demonstrates strong and appropriate personal boundaries in relationships; has a healthy appreciation of self, without being egotistical; is emotionally mature; can maintain a less- anxious presence in the midst of turmoil; is not overly dependent upon outside affirmation; works to build a strong personal support system.	

## **The Missional Church and the New Form of Government *Building a Community of Faith, Hope, Love and Witness* Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

With **greater freedom and flexibility**, the new Form of Government encourages congregations and councils to **focus on God’s mission and how they can faithfully participate in this mission**. In offering a structure that is more horizontal than hierarchical, the new Form of Government encourages the church to **be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit** as it seeks to **be Christ’s body** and **live out its calling as a community of faith, hope, love and witness**.

### **THE MISSIONAL CHURCH: PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**

God’s mission is at the heart of the new Form of Government and the mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The foundation for all mission is *missio Dei*, God’s own “self sending” in Christ by the Spirit to redeem and transform the world.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is not the church who sends, but God who sends the church into the world to be a community of witness called to testify and participate in God’s mission for the transformation of creation and humanity.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, the new Form of Government reminds us that mission goes beyond simply deciding which community service project to do or what congregational outreach priority to set, for mission gets at the core of who the Triune God is and who we are as God’s people.

### **GOD’S MISSION (F-1.01)**

The new Form of Government begins by recognizing “the good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit— creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people.”<sup>4</sup> In a world wrought with bad news, it is important for Presbyterians to recognize that the foundations of our polity and our understanding of church governance begin with “the good news.” Further, F-1.01’s emphasis on the “triune God,” calls us back to the *Book of Confessions*, which also begins with a discussion of the Trinity in the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds. Further, inline with John Calvin’s theology, God’s engagement with the world is an act of the whole Trinity and thus we cannot speak of one person of the trinity, without speaking of all persons of the trinity.<sup>5</sup> Third, emphasis on the “triune God” points to the relational reality of God and how the church is called to reflect this relational reality in its own life as a community.<sup>6</sup> Along these lines, we are reminded that the trinity reflects an indivisible community bound by love and justice modeling equality, unity and diversity.<sup>7</sup> As a whole, F-1.01 calls us to join with the triune God and participate in God’s mission of transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming the good news of God’s love, offering all people the grace of God at font and table and calling all people to discipleship.<sup>8</sup>

### **A MISSION-FOCUSED “FORM OF GOVERNMENT”**

**God’s mission acts as the central framework and is critical to understanding our entire Form of Government. Mission guides our understanding of:**

## *Appendix E – The Missional Church and the New Form of Government (Continued)*

- ❖ **Congregations**—“the congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context.” God’s mission shapes the life and witness of congregations and “through the congregation God’s people carry out ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship, to offer care and nurture to God’s children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, to bear witness to the truth and the reign of God that is coming into the world. (G-1.0101)
- ❖ **Membership**—Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is not only a joy and a privilege, but “also a commitment to participate in Christ’s mission.” We are reminded that faithful membership requires us to bear witness to God’s love and grace as well as requires responsible involvement in the ministry of Christ’s Church. (G-1.0304)
- ❖ **Councils**—The reason councils (sessions, presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly) “exist is to help congregations and the whole church be more faithful participants in Christ’s mission.” (G-3.0101)
- ❖ **Administration**—“Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work.” God’s mission should thus guide the policies and procedures of advisory handbooks, manuals of operations as well as council decisions to delegate powers. The administration of mission demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church, in that councils share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers. (G-3.0106)
- ❖ **Mission Funding**—“Funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s new creation in Jesus Christ, and should strengthen the church’s witness to the mission of God.” (G-3.0106)
- ❖ **Staffing**—“Councils higher than the session may employ staff as is required by the mission of the body.” Additionally, in consultation with the next higher council, councils may share staff as required by mission of the body. (G-3.0110)
- ❖ **Property**—“The property of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), of its councils and entities, and of its congregations, is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.” (G-4.0201)

### **Question for Discussion**

1. What does it mean for you and your church community to be faithful participants in God’s Mission?
2. How will you keep perspective and stay focused on God’s Mission in times of church conflict? How will mission guide your decisions during these times?

*Appendix E – The Missional Church and the New Form of Government (Continued)*

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<sup>1</sup> F-1.01; *see also* The Confession of 1967, 9:31-9:40

<sup>2</sup> Paul K. Hooker, *What is Missional Ecclesiology*, August 2009 at: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/what-missional-ecclesiology/>; Along these lines, mission is not primarily an “activity of the church, but an attribute of God.” *See also* David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology in Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 390.

<sup>3</sup> F-1.01; F-1.03; F-1.0202; *See also* Hooker, *supra* note 2, p. 1,3.

<sup>4</sup> F-1.01

<sup>5</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeil (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, MCMLX) 1.13.16-20. or p.140-145; *See also* Shirley Guthrie, *Christian Doctrine*, (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 92.

<sup>6</sup> *See* Donald McKim, *Introducing the Reformed Faith: Biblical Revelation, Christian Tradition, Contemporary Significance*, (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 32-33.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> F-1.01

## Appendix F

### The Church Needs Cultural Change

February 9, 2018, by Brad Brisco

*The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.*  
~ Alvin Toffler



When bringing about change in the way people behave, we often need to start with questions of “why” before considering the practical issues of “how.” In the book *Start with Why*, author Simon Sinek contends that there are two primary ways to influence human behavior: you can either manipulate it or inspire it. While manipulation is not always negative (for example when a department store drops the price of a product to motivate a purchase), it often involves the use of fear or peer pressure to influence behavior. Additionally, change that is manipulated is usually short-lived. Inspiring change, on the other hand, involves the consideration of deeper issues. We need to ask underlying questions of “why.” Why do we perceive things in a particular way? Why do we behave in a certain manner? What are the motivations or inherent factors that undergird our behaviors? In the book *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, Ronald Heifetz makes a distinction between organizational change and cultural change. Attempts at organizational change typically involve restructuring of some type, along with the use of new programs, processes and techniques. Cultural change, however, looks at how to create a new culture or environment, which will in turn require a completely new set of skills and capacities. The answer to the crisis of the church in North America will not be found by making minor adjustments in our ecclesiology—how we *do* church. Instead, the problem is much more deeply rooted. It has to do with the essence of who we are as the church and what we have been called to do. The real issues in the current crisis are primarily spiritual, theological and missiological. To plant disciple-making, missional-incarnational focused churches that have a mind-set of reproduction will take deep cultural change in the way we think about God’s mission and the nature of the church, as well as how the church engages in that mission in local contexts. We must change our attitude from “we have never done it that way before” to “whatever it takes.” An adage that speaks to the importance of considering change in an organization goes like this: We are perfectly designed to achieve what we are currently achieving. Read that again. We are perfectly designed to achieve what we are currently achieving. If we make application of this statement to the church today, one of the questions we might ask would be: Are we satisfied with what we are currently achieving? In other words, are we content or pleased with the impact the church is having today? If we are totally honest, the answer would seem to be a resounding *no*. The fact is, regardless of what marker a person looks at to judge the health of the church in North America, every indicator is trending in the wrong direction. If we are perfectly designed to achieve what the church is currently achieving, then shouldn’t we ask if there is an issue in the way we are designed? Or at least question if there is an issue in the way we understand the nature of the church and its place in God’s mission? Do we need to reconsider the way we think about church planting? Are there “design” factors that we need to rethink to achieve the outcomes we desire? The strategies and techniques that fit previous eras of church history don’t seem to work any longer. What we need now is a new set of tools. We need a new vision of reality, a new paradigm—a fundamental change in our thinking that leads to a fundamental change in our behavior, especially as it relates to our understanding of the church, mission, discipleship and church planting.