

STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM PROCESS AND CONSIDERATIONS

As Appendix A below records, the Strategic Planning Team has worked steadily and deliberately for nearly two years. From its inception it has understood that the Presbytery of the James, like the PCUSA itself and the world in which we live, is undergoing dramatic changes that directly impact the health of our congregations, leadership, and work as the Presbytery.

At its meeting in October of 2017, the Presbytery directed the SPT to:

- a) articulate a mission and vision for the POJ
- b) propose a structure for the implementation of the mission and vision
- c) recommend a financial plan for the implementation of the mission and vision.

What follows is the fulfillment of those mandates.

Mission Statement

The SPT's first task was to create a mission statement for the Presbytery that would speak effectively to these challenging times. With the four Provocative Proposals of the Vision 2020 Report in mind (see Appendix B), along with the mission and vision statements of numerous presbyteries within the PCUSA, it adopted its first version in August of 2019. With one subsequent modification, it now reads as:

“The mission of the POJ is to support leaders, congregations, and ministries in growing followers of Jesus Christ who joyfully live out God’s mission in the world.”

The Mission Statement is at the very center of the strategic plan. It is a broad description of **WHY** we do what we do in the POJ.

Vision Statements

From the Mission Statement the SPT created the following Vision Statements. Informed by the work of the Vision 2020 team, they describe the **WHAT** of the strategic plan. These are the goals and objectives we hope the Mission Statement inspires over the next 5 years.

- **Christ-centered Spiritual Growth:** specifically as this relates to POJ staff resourcing and supporting church leaders, pastors, and ministries.
- **Communication and Coordination:** specifically as these relate to connecting churches and ministries with one another and creating vital partnerships.

Three-Presbyter Staffing Model and Responsibilities

It became increasingly clear to the Strategic Planning Team that fulfillment of the Mission and Vision Statements would be through staffing. A Three Presbyter Staffing Model is the **HOW** that builds a bridge from our **WHY** (Mission Statement) to our **WHAT** (Vision Statements).

Staffing will include:

- Lead Presbyter for Vision & Collaboration (40 hours; head of staff)
- Presbyter for Relational Care (30 hours)
- Presbyter for Congregational Life (30 hours)
- Stated Clerk (15 hours)
- Associate for Administration (40 hours)
- Associate for Communications and Technology (20 hours)

Contracted services will include:

- Finance Manager (10 hours)

Characteristics & Competencies Anticipated for 3 Presbyters of the POJ

Be a faithful member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who is supportive of its ministry, demonstrating her, his, or their Christian faith and beliefs in working with the Presbytery of the James, its members, congregations and staff, and the broader community, upholding Christ's message to the world as revealed by the Creator, the Holy Spirit, and the Scriptures. They will represent the POJ to other councils, ecumenical bodies, and interfaith circles, and will participate actively in the GA Presbytery Leader Formation cohort and Mid-Council Leaders Gathering. Each Presbyter will collectively energize and resource the current seventeen Ministries and future Ministries and volunteers of the POJ to joyfully live out God's mission in the world.

Lead Presbyter for Vision & Collaboration

Responsibilities

- Discern who we are as a presbytery and help guide the POJ in how we joyfully live out God's mission in the world
- Consult and coordinate with the POJ members and staff on strategies for developing and supplementing effective means of communication for their ministries
- Supervise – with creativity, grace, and teamwork – the POJ staff in the implementation of decisions and matters of strategy, programming, and resources as determined by the presbytery
- Administer the budget of the POJ, under direction of the Budget Committee of Mission Council, including oversight and monitoring of expenditures, receipts, and disbursements

- Collaborate with the Presbyter for Congregational Life and the Presbyter for Relational Care as staff persons and resources to the Mission Council & Trustees
- Provide New Professional's Orientation; serve as staff liaison to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and other presbytery entities as time permits; attend virtual and in-person POJ staff meetings as scheduled
- 40 hours/week

Attributes

- Exceptional listener, effective communicator, perceptive leader, dreamer

Presbyter for Congregational Life

Responsibilities

- Celebrate and support existing ministries
- Guide and equip presbytery members and ministries in exploring new opportunities for enriching congregational life
- Collaborate with the Lead Presbyter for Vision & Collaboration and the Presbyter for Relational Life as staff persons and resources to the Mission Council & Trustees
- Serve as staff liaison to the Committee on Nominations (CON), the Committee on Representation (COR), and other presbytery entities as time permits; attend virtual and in-person POJ staff meetings as scheduled
- 30 hours/week

Attributes

- Visionary adviser, compassionate listener, adaptive thinker, risk-taker

Presbyter for Relational Care

Responsibilities

- Provide pastoral support and oversight of the POJ members, setting a tone for the pastoral care of ministers, educators, chaplains, and commissioned pastors
- Develop and encourage clergy peer groups, create opportunities for imaginative and relevant Christ-centered spiritual growth and renewal, and arrange counseling support in conjunction with the Committee on Ministry (COM)
- Collaborate with the Lead Presbyter for Vision & Collaboration and the Presbyter for Relational Life as staff persons and resources to the Mission Council & Trustees
- Serve as staff liaison to the Committee on Ministry (COM) and other presbytery entities as time permits; attend virtual and in-person POJ staff meetings as scheduled
- 30 hours/week

Attributes

- Supportive listener, faithful advocate, judicious adviser, even keeled

POJ Administrative and Support Staff Characteristics & Competencies

Stated Clerk

Responsibilities

- Execute and complete the duties enumerated in the *POJ Manual of Administrative and Standing Rules*, complying with responsibilities outlined in the *Book of Order* G-3.0104
- Prepare minutes for stated and called meetings of the presbytery; maintain regular communications to presbytery members and ministries related to actions of the presbytery; prepare attendance records and balancing of commissioners for presbytery meetings
- Serve as a resource to the standing committees of the POJ; serve as the officer of the presbytery as required by the Rules of Discipline in the *Book of Order*
- Assist clerks of session with regular training opportunities and annual statistical report preparation; coordinate annual session minutes review
- Implement tasks required in the PC(USA) EQUIP site for stated clerks and participate actively in the Association of Stated Clerks in the PC(USA)
- Attend virtual and in-person POJ staff meetings as scheduled; perform other duties as directed by, and coordinated with, the presbytery
- 15 hours/week

Attributes

- Detail-oriented, concise communicator, willing collaborator

Associate for Administration

Responsibilities

- Serve as POJ “first contact” by aiding callers, answering and/or disseminating emails, keeping the POJ website current, and assisting with online registrations for presbytery events
- Provide staff support to the three General Presbyters and the Stated Clerk; attend virtual and in-person POJ staff meetings as scheduled
- Provide staff support for ministries of the POJ, including scheduling for satellite office locations
- Prepare and publish meeting packets for stated and called POJ meetings; serve as point-person and resource for churches hosting POJ meetings
- Process and deposit checks to POJ bank account; notify appropriate persons upon receipt of financial gifts
- Maintain the presbytery database, master calendar, inventory of office supplies
- 40 hours/week

Attributes

- Detail-oriented, hospitality expert, welcoming demeanor

Associate for Communications and Technology

- Webmaster services for effectively promoting the POJ's mission and ministries
- Consults with individual congregations concerning their communication and technology needs
- Attends POJ stated and called meetings to provide technological support and service; may attend POJ virtual or in-person staff meetings when requested
- 20 hours/week

Attributes

- Creative, innovative, willing teacher

(Contracted Services)

Finance Manager

- Produce monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports; provide monthly reconciliation of all accounts
- Distribute funds in accordance with approved budget and financial policies of the presbytery; sweep and manage investments; act as purchasing agent
- Maintain payroll account in collaboration with contracted payroll company
- Attend Mission Council & Trustees meetings as scheduled; serve as resource to the Budget Committee, the Finance Advisory Group, and the Major Gifts Advisory Group
- Provide fiscal year-end accounting and audit preparation
- Coordinate, prepare, and distribute "End of Year" letter to clergy, treasurers, and clerks of session with Associate for Administration
- Reports to the Lead Presbyter for Vision & Collaboration
- 10 hours/week

Appendix A

STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM NARRATIVE MILESTONES

October 2017: The report of the Vision 2020 Team [See Appendix B] is referred back by Presbytery. A new group is to be formed whose purpose will be to:

- a) articulate a vision and mission for the POJ
- b) propose a structure for the implementation of the vision and mission
- c) recommend a financial plan for the implementation of the vision and mission.

October 2018: Presbytery approves Committee on Nominations recommendations for the following persons to serve on the Strategic Planning Team:

Jen Rowe (Moderator), Ruling Elder
Stephen Hodges (Vice-Moderator), Minister of Word and Sacrament
Liz Hulme Adam, Minister of Word and Sacrament
Thomas Coye, Minister of Word and Sacrament
Patrick Dennis, Minister of Word and Sacrament
Elizabeth Gatewood, Ruling Elder
Shannon Waite Hendricks, Minister of Word and Sacrament
Bobby Hulme-Lippert, Minister of Word and Sacrament
Katherine Jackson, Minister of Word and Sacrament
Marilyn Johns, Ruling Elder
Lamar Lockhart, Ruling Elder
Susan Mapes, Ruling Elder
Hal Raddin, Ruling Elder
Peter Ro, Ruling Elder
Katherine Todd, Minister of Word and Sacrament

Interim General Presbyter Fred Holbrook will also serve the Team in an *ex-officio* capacity.

January 2019: The Strategic Planning Team begins its work with personal introductions and an overview of its mandate [See Appendix B]. Copies of the Vision 2020 Final Report are distributed.

March-July 2019: After considerable research and discussion, the SPT adopts the following mission statement for the POJ based on the Vision 2020 report, the Book of Order, and the statements of numerous other presbyteries in the PCUSA.

The mission of the POJ is to support leaders, congregations, and ministries in growing followers of Christ who joyfully live out God's mission in the world.

August 2019-January 2020: To gain a better understanding of how the POJ can move forward in its mission, the SPT spends several meetings looking at both what is going well and what could use improvement within the POJ. Subjects explored included:

- the quality of presbytery meetings
- benefits and drawbacks of decentralizing the POJ's facilities and resources
- tapping the talents of persons within the POJ to help churches in their ministries
- the regional needs of pastors and churches
- the challenges of membership decline in many of the churches
- better spiritual, emotional and collegial support for pastors
- how the church can respond to the societal changes currently affecting life and work
- new ministries that are flourishing within the POJ

February 2020: The SPT reports to the Presbytery a summary of the Why, What and How of its work to date.

The mission statement serves as the **WHY** of our work.

The mission of the POJ is to support leaders, congregations, and ministries in growing followers of Christ who joyfully live out God’s mission in the world.”

The four provocative proposals of the Vision 2020 Report serve as the **WHAT** of what we wish to see accomplished in the Presbytery during the next several years.

- a) Christ-centered spiritual growth
- b) Equipping and supporting ministries
- c) Spiritual renewal of teaching elders
- d) Communication and coordination

The **HOW**, which embodies the new structure and financial plan, is currently in development.

March 2020: The SPT identifies the two most essential themes for the strategic plan:

- a) Communication and coordination, specifically as it relates to connecting churches with one another and creating vital partnerships
- b) Christ-centered spiritual growth, specifically as these relate to POJ staff resourcing and supporting churches and ministries.

April 2020: An exploration of the current staffing pattern is conducted to discern what needs be done to implement these themes.

May-June 2020: A first draft of a revised staffing pattern is discussed at length. Several modifications are suggested and incorporated.

July 2020: The idea of regional offices of the Presbytery is discussed. The decision is also made to alter the proposed Vision/Mission statement by adding “Jesus” to “Christ”:

The mission of the POJ is to support leaders, congregations, and ministries in growing followers of Jesus Christ who joyfully live out God’s mission in the world.”

August 2020: The staffing model is further refined along with an exploration of what it will take to fund it. Work begins on Strategic Planning Team’s report to Presbytery.

September 2020: The SPT begins assembling its report and developing a timeline for its presentation at the called meeting of the Presbytery in November, its listening sessions in January, and its submission for adoption at the February, 2021, meeting of the POJ.

Appendix B

VISION 2020 FINAL REPORT FOR INFORMATION ONLY: Did not Pass Presbytery by Majority Vote October 2017

The report that follows is based on the work of the VISION 2020 Team that was appointed by the Presbytery Moderator, Vice-Moderator and General Presbyter and presented at the October 2016 Stated Meeting.

Team Members: Rick Hinchberger (M.Div), *team captain* (Salisbury), Bill Brownfield (Ruling Elder, Three Chopt), Judy Cutting (Ruling Elder, Richmond Second), Ellen Davis (Ruling Elder, Providence Forge), Patrick Dennis (Teaching Elder, Tuckahoe), Tonya Johnson, (Ruling Elder, Eastminster), Bonnie Snyder (Ruling Elder, MAL), Brittany Tamminga (Teaching Elder, Fredericksburg), and Karen Witt (Teaching Elder, Providence, Gum Spring), and Rev. Dr. David Sawyer, Consultant from *Flourishing Church Consulting and Coaching*.

Purpose: The Team was tasked to develop a vision with specific “Provocative Proposals” which will come to fruition by the year 2020.

Approach: The Team began gathering data at the February 2017 Stated Meeting. We handed out forms completed by the commissioners with the following questions:

Tell about a time when you were most proud of being part of this presbytery. What happened? Who was there?

What are your passions as a disciple of Jesus Christ? How do you see your passions expressed in our presbytery?

Name one wish for our presbytery’s future.

We conducted listening sessions utilizing these same questions at session meetings, fellowship gatherings, Purpose Group meetings, with leadership teams and seminary representatives. The *Theme Statements* on the following pages summarize our findings along with specific comments (bulleted). After prayerfully considering these *Statements*, we developed four *Provocative Proposals* which build upon what we had heard in our meetings. These *Proposals* represent the final recommendation from the Team to be voted on by the Presbytery.

Future Work

With the acceptance of these Proposals, the Team completes its task and requests to be dismissed. It will be the task of the Implementation Teams appointed in the same manner as this Visioning Team to fashion the proposals into specific recommendations with practical application.

Our Thanks

We thank the churches, pastors and elders for their support in this process and for what they are doing and will do to further the Presbytery’s mission to the glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THEME STATEMENTS

The paragraphs below are narrative summaries of the responses we received from the questionnaires. The bullet points are actual or proximal responses that may represent multiple responses. Every effort was made to report them unedited.


A. THE PRESBYTERY'S MINISTRY OF SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

The Presbytery nurtures relevant, joyful, creative opportunities to refresh our life together in ministry. We welcome healthy, Spirit-filled celebrations, keynote event, and Christ-centered guest speakers. We provide times of special music and other artful experiences. Travel opportunities for small groups highlight our heritage and mission. Our commitment to evangelism is strengthened by our partnership with Union Presbyterian Seminary. Such transformative opportunities invigorate faithful discipleship and bind us together. A ministry of renewal infuses fresh spirit in service to Jesus Christ as it makes real the gift of God's good news.

- Transformation:
 - Congregations and individuals
 - Providing tools for transformation
- Revival
- Music
- Travel seminars
- Evangelism
 - Gospel
 - Share the faith
 - Grow in faith
- Motivating

B. THE PRESBYTERY'S MINISTRY OF EQUIPPING AND SUPPORTING

The Presbytery provides resources and support for member churches. The resources focus on, but are not limited to: Stewardship which is administered through Deborah Rexrode working with congregations, Evangelism with John Vest offering workshops on evangelism and the changing nature of the church, and Preaching with resources developed in partnership with Union Seminary which is a growing resource for the churches. In addition, The Resource Center at Kingsley Hall supports small churches, in particular, with programmatic materials.

- Resourcing
 - Stewardship - Debbie Rexrode
 - Evangelism- John Vest
 - Preaching
 - Seminary partnership
- 
- Three-legged stool

- Technology
- Hospice for churches - life cycle
- Small churches
- Resource Center
- Communication and Marketing
- New Church Development

C. THE PRESBYTERY'S MINISTRY OF MISSION AND JUSTICE

The Presbytery is a community of churches working passionately together to bring healing and hope to communities, both local and international. We encourage, support, and network with ecumenical and interfaith organizations for the purpose of witnessing to God's activity in the world. Welcoming racial, economic, and gender diversity, we promote and support ministries of social and racial justice, peacemaking, and self-empowerment. This endeavor continues through concentrated and purpose-driven efforts to focus on the heart and spirit-led passions of God's people, promote a culture of mutual acceptance, make room for differences, and celebrate our unique cultures and identities.

- Intentional direct involvement with congregations
- Culture of mutual acceptance
- Social justice
- Ecumenical cooperation
- Allowance for differences
- Local and international mission efforts
 - Concentrate our efforts through purpose groups
Haiti and Caritas
- Social issues
 - Hunger. Sexuality, Race, Gun violence
- Welcoming diversity
- Campus ministry
- Valuing and serving others
- New Church Development
- Innovation

D. THE PRESBYTERY'S MINISTRY OF CONNECTING

The Presbytery recognizes that as the Body of Christ we are better together than we are apart. We encourage opportunities of collaboration among our congregations and ecumenical partnerships. We also promote ministry and educational opportunities through a user-friendly and interactive website and broadcast emails. Additionally, technology such as electronic conferencing bridges the distance between member churches and enables increased support of the ministries. Camp Hanover is a model for effective relational ministry for the entire Presbytery. It supports congregations with summer camps, retreats, seminars, and conferences bringing together members of all ages.

- Camp Hanover
 - Cloning
 - Viability
- Technology
- Collaboration among churches
- 2-way communication
- Ecumenical partnership
- Seminary partnership
- Music
- Colleges and universities
- Building bridges
- Creative ways to forge and foster relationships
- Being the body of Christ

E. THE PRESBYTERY'S MINISTRY OF ENABLING AND COORDINATING

The Presbytery of the James works to support pastors and congregations. Our goal is that our congregations be well led and our pastors equitably supported. We understand the challenges of our Presbytery's geographical boundaries and the number of congregations; large and small, urban and rural. We work to improve communication with and among all. This diversity challenges us with the need to do more. We ensure our Presbytery meetings begin with worship, providing time for groups and interests to meet. We follow our Reformed Tradition in all matters of theology and polity.

- Presbytery meeting
 - Operating business
- Reformed tradition
- Polity
- Geography
 - Size of presbytery
- PC(USA)
- Us and them
 - Division
- Losing numbers
- Marketing and Communication

PROVOCATIVE PROPOSALS

It's the year 2020 and after a period of studying what Presbyterians in our Presbytery are saying about our identity and calling, we are focusing on spiritual renewal of its members and churches and on improving communication and coordination. These proposals are not intended to be a comprehensive capture of the Presbytery's ministry but rather innovative ways to further our mission.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL OF TEACHING ELDERS

To promote the spiritual health of the Pastors in ministry to congregations, our Presbytery provides annual retreats for spiritual renewal and reflection. Discovering that this experience has resulted in pastor's renewed energy for ministry, this time of focus on spiritual development is mandatory. The Presbytery is currently considering a similar experience for Christian Educators and church officers.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

To enhance our Presbytery's cohesiveness and be more responsive and accessible in disparate geographic regions, the Presbytery now has three regional offices. Presbytery leadership of a Head of Staff and two Associates are distributed among the offices. The regional offices work with local churches to establish and enhance technology to facilitate communication, ministry and spiritual growth. Regional leadership teams oversee each office with Presbytery committee meetings rotating among the three locations.

CHRIST-CENTERED SPIRITUAL GROWTH

To assist congregations in their spiritual growth, church vitality partners establish and nurture on-going relationships with churches and visit them at least semi-annually to listen, help them identify their spiritual gifts and strengths, and recommend opportunities for Christ-centered spiritual development.

EQUIPPING AND SUPPORTING CHURCHES

To further support churches in their spiritual growth, there are stated meeting(s) with the sole purpose of worship and study which may include liturgy, music, keynote speakers, small group conversation, contemplative prayer, Bible Study, and avenues to pursue the Spirit-led passions of God's people. To enrich their own worship, prayer and discipleship, *all congregants are welcomed*. Special meetings may be called in response to regional, nation and international events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1- That the Presbytery approve the four (4) provocative proposals: Spiritual Renewal of Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Communication and Coordination, Christ-centered Spiritual Growth, Equipping and Supporting Churches
- 2 - That Presbytery authorize the formation of implementation teams for each of the four (4) proposals.
- 3 - That Presbytery authorize the Moderator, Former Moderator, and the President of the POJ Trustees to appoint the implementation teams.
- 4 - That POJ Moderator dismiss with heartfelt thanks the Vision 2020 Team for their fine work and faithfulness.