

Seeking Transformation

Building Healthy, Flourishing, and Vibrant Congregations and Leaders

The Presbytery of Westminster, May 2022¹

I. Overview

The Presbytery has established a goal to start new witnessing communities. It has also committed itself to transformation through building healthy, flourishing, and vibrant congregations and supporting and encouraging leaders.² In order to achieve this goal, the Presbytery has agreed to set aside funds to help support new congregational initiatives. In addition to funds, the Presbytery may provide a certain expertise a congregation feels it is lacking.

A. Considering Congregational Transformation: What is it and what does it look like?

As we pray for and work toward transformation in our congregations, we need to acknowledge that it is new territory for most of us. Therefore, it is worthwhile to take time to ask some basic questions:

1. What do we mean by transformation?
2. What might it look like?

While it is possible to see transformation as the solution to reverse congregational decline, it is in fact, at the very heart of the gospel. It is what God does for a living. God transforms Moses from a shepherd into a leader of God's people. God shows Ezekiel a vision of dry bones coming to life again. God takes the death of Jesus and transforms it into victory over sin and death.

The road to transformation is the road to seeking more: more of God's work in us and more of God's work through us. It is marked by Jesus' words about those who are blessed because they hunger and thirst for the heart of God. In other words, the motivation for transformation has little to do with fixing our problems and a lot to do with hungering after God. That should not surprise us given Jesus' admonition to seek first the kingdom of God.

As Paul writes in his Letter to the Romans, transformation is God's work, but it also lies at the heart of our discipleship:

¹ This document largely represents the work of the Presbyter for Mission and Vision, the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods, with the collaboration of the Strategy and Leadership Committee.

² Transformation is not a one-time event. As Daryl Guder states in his book, *Missional Church*, "Its vocation to live faithfully to the gospel in a fully contextual manner means that it can sometimes find itself either unfaithful or uncontextual. In addition, the human context that shapes it continues to change. Therefore, the questions of faithfulness are always fresh ones. The gospel of God is never fully or finally discerned so that no further transformation can be expected. The interaction between the gospel and all human cultures is a dynamic one, and it always lies at the heart of what it means to be the church. P. 14.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2).

Or, as The Message paraphrases it:

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you (Romans 12:1-2).

From a Biblical perspective, transformation is much more than a means to solving our present problems. It is an offering of our whole selves to God, which is the heart of worship.³ While the world seeks a balanced life, the Christian seeks a centered life.

Considering Romans 12:1-2, the characteristics of transformation include:

- Humility
- Learning
- Discerning
- Clarifying Priorities

Transformation is ultimately about changed lives, our own and others⁴. Therefore, the primary question of working toward any congregational transformation is: To what end are we seeking this transformation? Unless the answer is to experience more of God in our lives and the work of God in our world, then it is not a quest for transformation but a desire to prop up the status quo disguised as the desire for transformation. That is why so much of the change that congregations say they want gets resisted when it is attempted.

Congregations can be motivated by different things. Some congregations are motivated by institutional survival. Some congregations are motivated primarily by their own growth, expanding the life and ministry of that worshipping community. Some congregations are motivated by engaging with the larger mission of God in the world. It is this latter motivation that is at the heart of transformational congregations.⁵

³ Transformation is tied to faith, not simply as a set of beliefs, but as an action: "The act of giving one's self into the keeping of what commands faith, to be transformed by it, and to serve it above all." It is the decision to orient one's life around the way required of such a life, to be in fellowship with others who are also seeking that life, maintaining the rituals that help to renew and deepen that commitment, and to search one's self for the hidden disloyalties and to confess and forsake them." Henry Wieman, *The Source of Human Good*, p. 52

⁴ By others we mean not only individuals, but communities.

⁵ Lyle Schaller, *44 Questions for Congregational Self-Appraisal*, p. 46-47.

B. A Theological Understanding of Transformation

What does this kind of transformation look like?

There are many ways to talk about the church but here we are referring to three main realities of the church:

1. It is called into covenant.
2. It is formed into community.
3. It is sent into mission.

Studies have been done on congregations that have gone through a process of transformation. Combining those studies with these three lenses provides us with a way of thinking about our own journey of transformation. What does a healthy, flourishing, vibrant congregation look like when we look through these three lenses and the experiences of others?

Called into Covenant

The church is God's creation. It has its origin in God's love and in God's call. God chooses a people and covenants that God will be their God and they will be his people:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set at liberty; so that you would show forth the virtues of the One Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. In the past, you were not a people, yet are now the people of God; who in the past were not under mercy, but now have obtained mercy (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Jesus reminds the disciples: "You did not choose me, but I chose you (John 15:16a)." Transformation is grounded in our understanding of this covenant. "We become capable of love through being loved."⁶ When we ground ourselves in God's covenant of grace in Christ, we find the confidence, hope, gratitude, and purpose required for transformation. This transformation shifts us from the kind of depression, anxiety, confusion, and inwardness that we often encounter apart from being grounded in God's covenantal grace. To paraphrase Henri Nouwen's prayer *Ebb and Flow*, 'Out of God's love the church came to life; by God's love the church is sustained, and to God's love it is always called back'.

Healthy, flourishing, and vital congregations root themselves in the covenant of God's grace in Christ and seek to let that reality, rather than their problems, define them. These churches are marked by certain beliefs, values, and behaviours:

- They live out of the confidence that God is present and active in their midst. Transformed congregations have a sense that they are on a journey led and directed by God's Spirit, drawing them to a future far beyond their imagination (1 Cor. 2:9).
- They are rooted in a love that will not let them go.
- They seek to know and follow God's will.
- They live in hopeful expectation and have a spirit of thanksgiving.
- They extend this same grace to others, so others feel accepted, encouraged, and included.

⁶ Thomas W. Currie III, *The Joy of Ministry*, p. 56

- They develop a greater awareness that they are always, first and foremost, the grateful recipients of the blessings, hopes and purposes of God’s reign.
- They are marked by prayer, asking that God will show them the way ahead and grant them the openness to which the Spirit of God may call them.
- They distinguish between urgency (the need to act) and anxiety (the worry that everything is up to us).
- They shift their focus from ‘what is’ to ‘what could be’ based on what God has done, is already doing in their midst, and the new things God will yet do.
- They don’t get bogged down in creating the perfect plan or the perfect community.
- Rather than work out of their anxiety, they engage in the purposes of God through their sense of worth and value as people chosen by God.

Reflection: As you read through this list, which characteristics are reflected in your own congregation? Which do you not see reflected in your own congregation? Is there an area to celebrate? If so, what is it? Is there an area of growth you would prioritize? If so, what is it?

Formed into Community

God’s covenant creates a community. “The church is the called and redeemed people of God. It is a people of God who are created by the Spirit to live as a missionary community.”⁷ When the risen Christ breathes the Spirit on the early disciples, the gift of the Holy Spirit is given to the whole community, not simply to individuals. Not only must they stay intimately connected to Christ as the source of their life, but they must also stay connected to one another (John 15).

The body of Christ is a real body, both holy and human. Transformation acknowledges this truth and recognizes that both organizational transformation and spiritual transformation are realities for the church.

Healthy, vibrant, and flourishing congregations create communities that:

- Appreciate that their unity is found in union with Christ, not their plans, goals or visions and therefore, are not simply dismissive of those with other ideas.
- Invite people to share their experiences, understandings, and insights as part of community.
- Emphasize and facilitate Christian growth and forming disciples as a primary purpose.
- Develop an attitude of servanthood where gifts are identified, encouraged, and developed.
- Celebrate worship that touches the whole person: mind, heart and will.
- Emphasize the norms of Christian maturity expressed through the fruit of the Spirit.
- Handle conflict positively and redemptively in ways that strengthens the community rather than divide it.
- Build trust, respect, and support for their leadership.
- Have effective communication so that vision, goals, ministry needs, and other aspects of church life are shared with the congregation.
- Are marked by a welcoming and compelling sense of community.

⁷ Craig Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church*, p.42

- Demonstrate a spirit of generosity where people share their time, gifts, and finances.

Reflection: As you read through this list, which characteristics are reflected in your own congregation? Which do you not see reflected in your own congregation? Is there an area to celebrate? If so, what is it? Is there an area of growth you would prioritize? If so, what is it?

Sent into Mission

When Jesus comes amongst the disciples who are hiding behind the closed doors, he comes not only that they might believe in the promise of the resurrection, but that he might continue his mission through them: “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21, Acts 1). “It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church.”⁸

The sense of urgency needed for change is not found in the problems of the church, but rather in the message and mission it has been given. “Only the awareness that your church can and will make a difference between life and death for people provides the urgency for redevelopment.”⁹ The primary question in the planning process is not, ‘What do we want?’ but rather, ‘What can we do that would deepen our faithfulness to our calling?’¹⁰

Transformation requires going back to the essentials of what it means to be the church. Unless that work is done, the best we can hope for is tinkering with what is already not working. The church was never meant to be the object of our love, but rather the subject and instrument of God’s love. As a mission-oriented community its calling is to express this love in word and deed grounded in the grace of God. This love is a healing and reconciling love, and as Jesus healed those who came to him (Matt. 15:29-31) so the church continues to be:

A gathered crowd around Jesus. A faithful church, now and into the twenty-first century, knows its identity, and in the deepest religious sense we are merely a crowd gathered around Jesus. We come as a crowd with our brokenness and handicaps, looking for God’s healing touch. We come praising Jesus’ name for making us well. However organized we might be, however prestigious we might feel, we are nothing more sophisticated than a crowd hungering for wholeness.¹¹

Having tasted something of God’s grace in our own brokenness, we enter into the lives of others to share the healing presence of God in Christ through words of grace and acts of kindness, inviting others to experience God’s grace and join us in following after Jesus. We call it making disciples.

The primary purpose of the church is to bear witness to this good news in the world. But this good news is always in relationship to bad news.¹² The good news for the man who was blind was to have his eyesight restored. The good news of the women who had been hemorrhaging for many years was to be

⁸ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (London: SCM, 1977) 64. Quoted in Darrell Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, 67.

⁹ Sellon, Smith, and Grossman, *Redeveloping the Congregation: A How To for Lasting Change*, p. 4.

¹⁰ In a study of other congregations, transformation happened when congregations let their mission determine their meeting place, how they did worship, and their strategies. Leaders helped their people fall in love with their community, through prayer, teaching, and preaching. Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches* (p. 58) Kindle Edition.

¹¹ Robert Randall, *What People Expect from Church*, p. 15.

¹² Loren Mead, *Transforming Congregations for the Future*, p. 37.

healed. Congregational transformation is not about generic ways to fix the world. It is always contextual. It is about a particular calling to which we believe God has called us to engage with a particular pain in the world for which we believe we have the resources and passion. For different congregations, this will mean different things.

Healthy, vibrant, and flourishing congregations:

- Pray for their local community
- Connect mission with who they are¹³
- Engage with their community to understand the needs that exist and ways to connect
- Find the human hope or hurt that speaks to them
- Believe God promises to provide what we need in order to be faithful to our calling
- Run the plays the players can run¹⁴
- Help lay people connect their vocation with their faith
- Engage in planned evangelism
- Keep the reign of God central to the life and work of the church

Reflection: As you read through this list, which characteristics are reflected in your own congregation? Which do you not see reflected in your own congregation? Is there an area to celebrate? If so, what is it? Is there an area of growth you would prioritize? If so, what is it?

C. A Picture of Transformation – What We Can Learn From Others

Studies have been done highlighting the changes various congregations have made in their journey toward transformation. Seldom was it a moment of brilliant light, but more often a matter of taking one step at a time as they felt led by the Spirit.

What Was Learned

The fundamental change was a change in heart, from simply ‘doing church’ to ‘doing ministry where people’s lives were changed’. It was a desire to meet people’s needs where they were hurting or a change of life for individuals.¹⁵ The renewed passion created an outward focus and moved the congregations from ‘congregations about us’ to ‘congregations for mission’.

Real ministry meant being a congregation marked by:

- welcome
- changed lives
- meeting community needs

¹³ Congregations cannot be all things to all people. Part of congregational life and leadership is discerning the particular vocation that is true to who we are as a congregation. As Parker Palmer writes in his book, *Let Your Life Speak*, “Vocation does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear. Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am. I must listen for the truths and values of the heart of my own identity, not the standards by which I must live—but the standards by which I cannot help but live if I am living my own life.” This is as true for congregations as it is for individuals.

Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*, p. 4-5.

¹⁴ Kennon Callahan often makes this comment in his presentations, noting that congregations are like people; their best work comes when they work with the gifts they have, rather than trying to do what they are not equipped to do.

¹⁵ Both are seen in the life of Jesus. He meets the need of the blind man by restoring his sight. He meets the need of Zacchaeus by offering him a new direction in life.

- congregational vibrancy and growth
- witness for Christ¹⁶
- a high value on authenticity and the integrity of belief and practice
- dynamic spiritual growth
- the good news of the reign of God celebrated.

Transformational congregations expressed a strong desire for a greater coherence among the gospel, ministry, and being church.¹⁷ In other words, it was a matter of reconnecting the message of the gospel with the purpose of the church expressed through the ministry of the church.



This desire came out of a holy discontent that the present life of the congregation was less than what people hoped for or believed God desired of them.

The Questions to Consider

What did real ministry look like on the ground as the clergy and laity led their congregations out of decline and into vital faithfulness? What changes took hold in their corporate beliefs and everyday practices that over time established a new, different, and enduring culture of church? What kind of leadership ushered in this new ecclesial identity that people called real ministry?

What These Congregations Were Like Before They Experienced Transformation

- These congregations demonstrated an everyday ecclesial identity in which the church was conceived as an end in itself, created primarily for the members and their needs.
- They relied upon a small cadre of lay leaders, who were overworked, and undernourished spiritually.
- The ministers felt beleaguered.
- The focus was on maintaining the current program and practices.
- The priority was to merely keep the doors open as long as they could.
- The nominating process for new leaders had become a chore.
- New leaders were few and their contributions often thwarted.
- There was a climate of anxiety.
- While the laity depended upon the minister for specialized duties and said that they wanted him or her to lead, this leadership was questioned and resisted at every turn resulting in a distrustful tension that permeated the system.
- They engaged in secularized conversations and practices without explicit attention to a relationship with God.

¹⁶ In a study on renewed congregations, the three most important factors identified in the transformation were renewed belief in Jesus Christ and the mission of the church, renewed attitude for servanthood, and a more strategic prayer effort.

Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, p. 55. Kindle Edition.

¹⁷ This follows closely Craig Van Gelder's argument in his book *The Essence of the Church* where he argues that the church must work first from identity which leads to its mission which leads to its organization. In other words, the church is, the church does what it is, and the church organizes what it does. Craig Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church*, p. 95

- Parishioners considered a relationship with God to be a private, individual matter, and uncomfortable to broach. Talk about and with God was limited to the context of Sunday worship and liturgy.

Reflection: Are there any of these characteristics that are true for your congregation? If so, what are they?

What These Congregations Were Like After They Experienced Transformation

While there were numerous changes that occurred in the lives of the leaders and the life of the congregation, the greatest change was from a “Church for Us” to a “Church for Witness.”

- Their understanding of what church is supposed to be and how they lived out this ecclesiology was less preoccupied with themselves and meeting their own needs, and more about bearing outward-reaching witness to the benefit of others.
- They gave far greater attention to cultivating spiritual gifts and connecting lay leaders to corresponding ministries.
- The pastor, staff, and laity exercised authority in the congregation within its norms and values, which they had taken time to articulate, clarify, and uphold.
- The clergy and lay leaders practiced spiritual disciplines to connect to God and corporately discern God’s direction for their congregation.
- The overwhelming majority of members recognized the hand of God at work in their rebirth.
- Spirituality became a greater part of the culture of the congregations.
- Adopting spiritual disciplines and varied forms of prayer, they sought God’s leadership for the decisions they needed to make.

Reflection: Are there any of these characteristics that you see evidenced in your congregation?

Notable Shifts

There were twelve areas of congregational life that dramatically shifted:

- (1) the congregation’s attitude toward change
- (2) clarity around identity, purpose, mission, and vision—i.e. their sense of vocation
- (3) institutional viability and numerical growth
- (4) leadership
- (5) quality of congregational life and interpersonal relationships
- (6) relationship to God—practice of spirituality
- (7) relationship to the church beyond the congregation
- (8) relationship to the context
- (9) structures of organization and decision-making

- (10) teaching and learning
- (11) welcome, hospitality, and diversity
- (12) worship, music, and preaching¹⁸

These areas of change follow Loren Mead’s description of the four ways a congregation can grow: spiritually, numerically, organizationally, and incarnationally. These four ways of growth intersect with and have an impact on each other.

The Significance of Scripture

These congregations went back to Scripture to reclaim their purpose. They studied passages of Scripture focusing on themes such as the reign of God in the world¹⁹ and the vocation of the people of God and the church to be witnesses to this rule in the manner that Jesus embodied and taught it.²⁰ They came to reaffirm that “The reign of God...is a present reality that often works in hidden, ordinary, and surprising ways.”²¹ They came to see the church as being in the process of becoming what it is called to be, freely and continually turning to God, and apprenticing through the Holy Spirit.²²

Three Moves

While the situation will be different for different congregations, transformational congregations went through three basic moves: discerning, integrating, and bearing witness. This included (1) discerning the lead of God for their specific vocational call in the world, (2) living into this ecclesial vocation over time by intentionally changing and integrating corresponding beliefs and practices in the twelve areas of congregational life, creating a new congregational culture, and (3) organically giving witness verbally and physically to God’s active leadership.²³ In other words, they worked through clarifying: What the church is; what the church does; and how it organizes what it does. It worked from the priority of asking ‘what is our purpose?’ to ‘what are our priorities?’ to ‘what is our plan?’

Discernment was central and included such things as “coming to terms with the past, healing from conflict, redeveloping lay leadership, including spirituality and giftedness, raising awareness about the surrounding context, and discerning the particular vocational call of God to the congregation for its future.”²⁴ The process usually began with a small steering group of the pastor and lay leaders who committed themselves to ‘deep listening’.

Through the transformation process, the pastors and congregations began to bear witness to the lead of God in the present. They believed they could discern God’s lead and were able to integrate that leading

¹⁸ Jean Halligan Vandergrift, “Leading Church Change with End and Means Integrity: Three Turns Toward the Reign of God” *Journal of Religious Leadership*, Fall 2017 Vol. 6 p. 98-99

¹⁹ Three key texts were Isaiah 43-44, Acts 1:1-14, and Revelation 1-3. Vandergrift, “Leading Church Change with End and Means Integrity: Three Turns Toward the Reign of God” *Journal of Religious Leadership*, Fall 2017 Vol. 16 p. 101

²⁰ Vandergrift, p. 101-102

²¹ Vandergrift, p. 102

²² Vandergrift, p. 102

²³ Vandergrift, p. 106.

²⁴ Vandergrift, p. 106-107.

into the life of the congregation “bearing witness in their person, time, and place to their experienced good news of God’s leadership.”²⁵

Reflection: Does your congregation have a clear sense of its purpose, its priorities, and its plan? If not, what would it need to do?

A Process that Involves the Community

While transformation can happen in a variety of ways, it includes the community of faith. As the saying goes, those who row the boat have little time to rock the boat. Transformation was arrived at differently in different congregations but almost every congregation experienced the following:

Learning tables: Where, with capable leadership, congregants learned more about their faith and sharing their own wisdom of living with faith in the real world which often led to a consensus of insight and action.²⁶

Decision-making tables: Leaders worked to shape their board and committee meetings into experiences of “worshipful work.” The goal was to collectively discern God’s guidance on various matters, as contrasted with their prior pattern of voting up or down on personal preferences, and sometimes falling into division and destructive forms of conflict.

Community tables: Congregations sent representatives to the tables where the concerns of the wider community (its needs, aspirations, and decisions) were the agenda, and/or host events to which the community was invited, in order to nurture a relationship with its “neighbors” and to offer itself in solidarity or assistance.

The Lord’s Table: In weekly worship, these congregations gathered around the Lord’s Table, turning to each other and its Host in order to share communion in Christ, to align with, and abide in the reign of God.

These tables allowed for learning and listening. Transformation into healthy, vibrant, flourishing congregations ultimately involves congregations identifying and clarifying their purpose and integrating it into every aspect of ministry including their relationship with the wider community. It requires the willingness to evaluate all twelve areas of church life and in some cases turning away from past actions and beliefs in order to turn toward the new culture and vision to which they believe God is calling them.

Summary

Transformation is not simply about changing the functions of the church (what it does) or the organization of the church (how it does its ministry). It begins with a deep desire to be what God has called it to be. It is not accomplished through a program but through a process. You cannot program

²⁵ Vandergrift, p. 106

²⁶ Jean Halligan Vandergrift, Dissertation 2015 THE DANCE OF A CHANGING CHURCH: A PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OF CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION <https://hdl.handle.net/2144/15674> Boston University pp. 389-395.

transformation, but it is possible to take steps that increase the possibility of transformation through patient discernment rather than finding answers that come too quickly.²⁷ This discernment includes:

- Beginning with a yearning for God – seeking first the reign of God.
- A desire to move from being a ‘church for us’ to a ‘witness to the reign of God’.
- A clear sense that they were living into the experience of *God as the actual leader of the congregation’s future and as the agent of transformation.*
- Grounding transformation in Scripture.
- A renewed awareness of the purpose of the church beyond its functions or organization.
- A willingness for leaders to engage in personal change.
- A commitment to discernment.
- A willingness to experiment and learn from what worked or didn’t work.
- A holistic approach to how congregations grow not focusing only on numerical growth.
- A willingness to ask who is my neighbour, now?
- Taking spiritual gifts seriously and working with the gifts God has already given to the community of faith.
- Leaders willing to lead.²⁸
- A strong lay leadership.²⁹
- Equipping lay leadership.³⁰
- Clergy and laity working together cooperatively, as a “team” where people did not compete with each other but completed each other.³¹
- Decision making that was formed by “alignment” with the congregation’s aspirational vocation statement.
- Transformation brought about through relationships.
- The belief that God very actively gifts, calls, and equips all Christians and each congregation into service toward God’s purpose.
- The change that the leaders wanted to bring about in the church matched the manner in which they led the change. It was not simply about building a plan but building a people.

²⁷ Doug Paul writes, “One of the many interesting and appealing things about questioning is that it often has an inverse relationship to expertise—such that, within their own subject areas, experts are apt to be poor questioners. Frank Lloyd Wright put it well when he remarked that an expert is someone who has ‘stopped thinking because he knows’.” Doug Paul, *Ready or Not*, p.59

²⁸ Vandergrift, “Leading Church Change with End and Means Integrity: Three Turns Toward the Reign of God” found at <https://arl-jrl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Vandergrift-Paper.pdf>. p. 4-5.

This meant a “called leadership with authority, commitment for the long haul, being innovative, motivational, contextually astute, patient, strategic, willing to learn, and spiritually anchored in God. The preferred style of ministerial leadership for achieving revitalization was directive and collaborative at the same time with the clergy person exercising good judgment as to when to step forward and step back, to press people and to allow circumstances to play out on their own. Thus, as Swidler and others have concluded, the pastor needs improvisational skills to lead church change.”

²⁹ Ibid, p. 5. There was strong lay leadership” encompassing a variety of lay roles in the congregation, from elders and deacons, to teachers and small group leaders. Their strength as lay leaders showed forth in multiple traits, including a sense of their giftedness and their call to ministry, a willingness to nurture other leaders, the ability to listen and cultivate communication in the congregation, and trusting and keeping in tune with God

³⁰ Ibid, p. 6. “Equipping lay leadership entailed uncovering and nurturing their spiritual gifts, finding ways for the laity to exercise these gifts in real ministry inside and outside the congregation, and changing to a gift-based nomination process. Still other strategies involved creating multiple, small learning groups for adults, and teaching corporate discernment practices within regular meetings.”

³¹ Ibid, p. 6.

- Continually asked, “Are we still doing the things that this community needs us to do the most, and that the Lord needs us to do the most?”

Transformation does not happen by having a once for all-time eureka moment or one big idea. It comes through hunches and partial ideas that are built through relationships and new ideas. It comes because people have a questioning mind, a sense of necessity connected to a sense of holy discontent. It is willing to review its ministries and ask Why are we doing this and why are we doing it this way? It sees the world optimistically because it senses God leading us into the world God loves and is re-creating. In the end, the transformation is about moving from “a church for us” to “a church for others.” It is about becoming mission outposts of good news.

Every congregation can make steps toward transformation. There is no ‘one’ path. It is a matter of raising the questions rather than moving too quickly to easy answers. It is a matter of looking at the factors that provide opportunity for transformation and choosing one or two that are the best places to start for your congregation.

Engaging in a Journey of Transformation	
1.	<p>Why do we exist? (Who is the church for?) What is our vision of God’s mission to be accomplished through our community of faith?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate a clear sense of purpose in the congregation that is: rooted in the promises of God fulfilled in Jesus Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures; aligned with our resources and gifts; builds on the things we are good at; and inspires our commitment.
2.	<p>Who are we, now? (Our identity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are our gifts? • What is the difference we are trying to make?
	<p>Who is our neighbour, now? Who are you seeking to serve and why? (Our context)</p> <p>Connect with the community to understand the needs that exist and ways to engage that invite collaboration in embodying forgiving and reconciling love and make any adjustments to the changing contexts you sense appropriate according to your gifts, competency, and commitment.</p>
3.	<p>What do we believe God is calling us to do, now? (Our purpose)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time on imagining ‘what could be’ to reach the neighbour/s you are best resourced to serve. • What knowledge do you need to gain to know what your neighbour needs/values?
4.	<p>What would it look like if we were faithful and fruitful to our calling? (The difference we seek to make)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would lives change?
5.	<p>How have we shaped the spiritual and organizational life of our congregation to foster the transformation we seek? (Our strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate practices in your worship, learning, fellowship, committees/teams, and service that connect faith and vocation for everyone participating in the mission of your congregation/ministry that nourishes their whole person (spirit, emotions, and intellect) in the gifts they bring. • Create transparency and open communication.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide encouragement of and opportunities for prayers for your neighbourhoods, your presence in and for them, and the transforming influences you wish to have in those relationships. • Engage in healing and forgiveness that can overcome negative conflict. • Regularly assess, Are we still doing the things that our community needs us to do?
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As we move toward transformation, we are invited to ask two further questions:

1. What have we learned from our experience (the learning/evaluation question)
2. What reshaping or changing do we need to work on because of what we have learned? (The ready, fire, aim question)³²

II. A Rubric for the Journey Toward Congregational Transformation

It may be that you are at the place of transformation where Presbytery support could be helpful. For congregations seeking support, the following criteria has been developed.

This rubric is offered as a tool to help you consider where you are at the present time. It can help you highlight areas in your congregational life that may require greater attention. The danger of course, is that we might simply think that the immediate response is to work harder. But seldom does trying harder answer our deepest needs. Instead, we are invited to ask a much more freeing question: How can reflection on and conversation around scripture, prayer, the purposes of God, and the gift and resources of the congregation, and the presence of the Holy Spirit help us move toward greater transformation?

The following rubric can help you reflect on your own ministry.

One of the first steps in the change process is to gain a clearer picture of where are so that we can agree that where we are is the best place for us to be or we can agree that change is needed. If we agree that change is needed, then it follows that we need enough clarity to at least take the next step that will move us toward becoming a more vibrant and flourishing congregation. This rubric is offered as a tool to help you consider where you are at the present time. It can help you highlight areas in your congregational life that may require greater attention. The danger of course, is that we might simply think that the immediate response is to work harder. But seldom does trying harder answer our deepest needs. Instead, we are invited to ask a much more freeing question: Where do we sense God’s leading in our lives and how might we invite the work of the Holy Spirit into our midst so that we can know more of God and be freer to be used by God?

For each description you are invited to indicate if the statement is true for you, somewhat true for you, or not true for you. How does your assessment help you discern what steps you need to take?

³² These questions can be found in Gil Rendle’s book, *Doing the Math of Mission*.

Congregations for Us – Congregation for Others

Statement	True of us	Somewhat True of Us	Not True of Us
1. We have a clear sense of purpose in our congregation that is rooted in Scripture			
2. We have a clear sense of purpose in our congregation that is rooted in Scripture			
3. There is a strong sense that we are living into the future God has promised for us			
4. Our primary focus is on our own members			
5. Our priority is to keep our doors open as long as possible			
6. We rely on a small cadre of lay leaders who are over worked			
7. Our primary focus is on maintaining our current program and practices			
8. We engage with the community to understand the needs that exist and find ways to connect			
9. We help lay people connect their faith with their vocation			
10. We pray often for our local community and specific needs within it			
11. Our worship seeks to touch the whole person: mind, heart, and will			
12. We handle conflict in a positive and healthy way			

13. We have clear communication with the congregation regarding our vision, goals, ministry needs			
14. Hope and thanksgiving are highlighted in our work			
15. Prayer, asking for Gods' guidance by the Spirit, is a significant factor in our life together			
16. While caring for the present we also spend significant time on 'what could be'			
17. We spend time cultivating the spiritual gifts within our community and connect people to ministries according to their gifts			
18. We are clear on what are key values are as a congregation and most people in the congregation could tell you what they are			
19. We encourage spiritual disciplines both corporately and individually			
20. Our leadership spend significant time and attention to discerning God's leading in our congregation			
21. Our session and committees see their work as 'worshipful work' and this is marked by the way we conduct our meetings			
22. We are knowledgeable about the needs in our community and who our neighbour is			
23. Our congregational culture is marked by a desire to witness to the reign of God			
24. We regularly ask, "Are we still doing the things that this community needs us to do the most, and that the Lord needs us to do the most?"			

Seven Practices Toward Transformation

As you reflect on your congregation's vitality, desire for transformation, and areas to address, these seven practices may prove helpful in developing a vital and healthy trajectory of attitudes and actions that align communities with God's forgiving and reconciling love in Jesus Christ through the reforming influence of the Holy Spirit. There are two faces to the transforming – within the community and among their neighbours.

Develop a clear sense of your purpose rooted in the promises of God fulfilled in Jesus Christ as witnessed to in the scriptures
Conduct an annual review of your discernment of the places where God is at work in your chosen neighbourhoods that invite collaboration in embodying forgiving and reconciling love and make any adjustments to the changing contexts you sense appropriate
Cultivate practices in your worship, learning, fellowship, and service that connect faith and vocation for everyone participating in the missioning of your congregation/ministry/new witnessing community and that nourishes their whole person (instincts, emotions, and intellect) in the gifts they bring to serving others.
Provide encouragement of and opportunities to offer prayers for your neighbourhoods, your presence in and for them, and the transforming influences you will generate in those relationships.
Focus attention on the multiple ways in which your practices mold your participants to be more faithful, wise, and effective ambassadors for the God's forgiving and reconciling love in Jesus Christ.
Educate and equip Session and working groups to steward the resources and responsibilities delegated to various ambassadors of the organization's purpose.
Evaluate the positive impact that various collaborations with the presbytery, the national church, and other congregations/ministries/witnessing communities are having on the transforming missioning of your organization. What would support you better?

III. A Process for Seeking Transformation

We would like to propose a process to help congregations move forward in their own discernment. Many congregations, if they were honest, would say that they feel stuck. It is not that they do not want to serve God's purposes in the world, but they simply have exhausted what they know. They need help to find a new way forward.

The SLC would like to suggest that part of the work of the PMV be to work with congregations who want to go through a discerning process to see what new steps they might take. They will be different for different congregations since congregations are contextual. This process would include:

1. An assessment of a congregation's present ministry
2. Engaging in a visioning process which would include identifying the values upon which mission decisions are made. *Note: These values might contribute to a congregation's "stuckness" or, on the other hand, to new, healthy directions a congregation may have embarked on.*
3. Clarifying the next most faithful steps

4. Seek support in a variety of ways from the presbytery as needed

We suggest that the fourth item be conditional upon congregations going through the first three items. Only after congregations have a clear vision of where they are going can they know the support they will need.

We recognize that some congregations have already done this work in which case we would ask congregations to describe the process they have used or are using and the next steps they have identified through that process.

A workshop was held with the purpose of helping congregations with the tools necessary to set out a strategic vision.³³ A summary of that workshop is also available on the Presbytery of Westminster website. The Strategy and Leadership Committee is also learning as we go. As congregations evaluate their present ministries and future possibilities, we want to keep in front of us the question: How do we support each other to best fulfill our calling to express the love of God in Christ?

IV. Applications

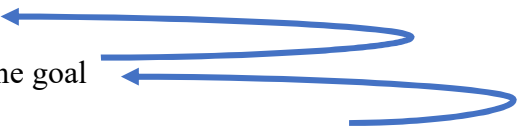
Congregations wishing to apply for Presbytery funds to assist in their work toward transformation are asked to complete the statements in the above rubric, complete the grant application, and submit a complete budget for what is being requested as well as the congregation's regular budget. (Note: There is a fillable pdf version of the rubric).

The Purpose of the Application Process

The application process is offered as a way for you to clarify your vision and goals to yourself as well as to others. We encourage you to take the time needed to prayerfully reflect on the different questions. They are meant to provide clarity around:

- What you are trying to achieve
- Who will help get you there?
- Your timeline
- How much money and other resources will it take?
- What if all does not go as planned?
- What is the difference you are trying to make and how will you know you have made it?

They will provide you the opportunity to clearly communicate your:

- **Goals** = what you want to achieve
 - **Strategy** = how you can achieve the goal
- 

³³ If you wish to watch the video presentation you can find it at this link:

https://player.vimeo.com/external/635603494.hd.mp4?s=b9c3478f6fa2861e0cb39915238cea204b334cee&profile_id=175

Please note: It is not to be shared with anyone outside of the Presbytery context in agreement with the Sauder School of Business.

- **Tactic** = the action/s you need to take to achieve the strategy

As stated in the workshop by Perry Atwal, all strategic plans must deal with the ambiguity of the future. While it is possible to cast a vision for the next 5 years, the strategy needs to be designed for 2-3 years and the tactics need to be set for the first 1-2 years. In other words, we work backwards from vision to strategy to tactics while focusing on implementing the tactics. Tactics allow us to work with the highly probable events and as those come to fruition we achieve more of the strategy and as that is achieved, we achieve more of the vision.



Because the future is unknown, our plans must consider the “what if” of possible scenarios. Asking what could get in the way of meeting our goal is what others refer to as a sensitivity analysis. It considers the unknown variables related to the strategic plan. For example, if we have based our budget on filling 25 rental units, what would happen if we filled only 18? How would that impact the budget etc. If we have calculated that we will receive 30% of our funding from government agencies, what will happen if we receive only 15%? If we are depending on sources of income from various partners, what will happen if one source does not materialize?

Ministry plans should include ‘what ifs’ related to the ministry proposal and there are questions in the application that directly address this concern.

Every ministry plan requires an action plan that sets out the major actions that need to take place with the specific dates of when they need to happen and who will be responsible. These should be a manageable number (10-15). An action plan also includes the measurements we are intending to use along the way. How will progress be measured along the way? Measuring our progress needs to align to the ministry plan and could include things such as:

- Our financial situation
- The value for those being served
- The value for those leading – personal growth and development
- The difference we are making

Each ministry plan will need its own ‘score card’ to determine its progress toward its preferred future. What would ‘a balanced scorecard’ look like given the transformation or the new mission you are engaged in? What measurements matter in this ministry? The application questions also seek to address this aspect of the proposal.

In the end, we are looking for proposals that have clarity regarding these six key questions:



Responses to the questions should be of sufficient length to provide an ‘outsider’ with clarity of the purpose and the basic plan of the initiative. Avoiding unnecessary detail will also be helpful. The detail of your plan should be commensurate with the amount of funds you are requesting. Applications will be assessed on the overall goals of the Presbytery as well as the criteria set out in the following categories of the application form.

V. Application Questions

A. Introducing Your Project

Please tell us a bit about your project:

- In a few sentences, what is the main thrust of this mission?
- What is the status of this mission? For example, is it in the early planning stages? Has it already started? If so, have any early goals been met?
- Is this project being done in collaboration with anyone else? For example, a local congregation, an agency of The PCC, a community group? If so, what stage are you at in receiving additional support?

B. Clarifying Your Vision: Clarity/Relevance

- What is the vision behind this proposal?
 - Who is this ministry initiative directed toward? Please be specific.
 - What is the specific challenge or need this ministry seeks to address?
 - How do you anticipate that lives will be changed as a result of this ministry? Please be specific.
 - How do you see this ministry in relationship to the mission of God?
 - How do you imagine your congregation will be different 5 years from now as a result of this ministry?

C. Creating Your Plan: Feasibility

- What are the specific goals of this ministry? If there is more than one, please list them in terms of priority.
- What are the assumptions this initiative is making?
 - Have these assumptions been tested? For example, is there research that can be utilized?
 - Has another group done similar work elsewhere in the same or similar type of ministry initiative?
 - Have the needs of the people the ministry is seeking to reach been sufficiently described and analysed?
 - Have you engaged in specific conversations with others?
- What are the strategies required to achieve each specific goal?
- What is your detailed plan to achieve each strategy?
- What are the 'what ifs' you have taken into account?
- What is the timeline? If it is expected to be more than one year, please provide a timeline up to three years.

D. Developing Your Resources: Capacity

- What resources, other than financial, will you need for this initiative to be fruitful? Consider:
 - physical resources (What facilities will you need, if any, and how will you get them?)
 - people resources (Who will help you? How will you bring people into this ministry?)

- technical resources (What technical skills or resources will this ministry require, if any?)
- What financial resources will you require?
 - Provide a detailed balanced budget of where your finances will come from and where they will be expensed. (If this is a multi-year project, please provide the budget for the first three years.)
 - What is your plan for securing the necessary funds?
 - What contingency plans do you have if some funds do not materialize?
 - How have you factored in long-term financial sustainability for this ministry?

E. Building Your Team: Competency

- Please provide a brief summary of who is on your team and the gifts they bring to this ministry.
- What time and other commitments do you expect of the leaders of this project?

F. Evaluating Your Progress and Your Learning:

- What have you learned about this ministry that can help you plan for the future?
- What does ‘success’ look like for this ministry?
- What are your hoped-for benchmarks along the way? Please be specific.
- How will you assess this ministry? Please be specific.
- Who will be involved in the assessment process?

G. Establishing Accountability

- What accountability structures will be built into this initiative, specifically to the Presbytery, and how will those structures relate to any other partner?
- How will the initiative meet any provincial and federal requirements, if applicable?

Reviewing Your Application

Before you submit your application, take a moment to review it in light of these three critical elements:

1. Financial Vitality/Sustainability – the congregation has the finances it needs to carry on for the foreseeable future i.e. at least a 5 year period with adequate provision for its ongoing ministry and mission, including any capital improvements needed. Congregations that do not have the financial support they need for their present ministries will find it difficult to support new initiatives, even if these initiatives are funded from other sources.
2. Missional vitality/sustainability—occurs when the mission a congregation engages in matches its gifts and resources so that the ministry it offers is effective and real needs are met. Mission sustainability is when our resources meet a real need in a way that a positive difference is made in the lives of others. So a question would be, “Looking over the next five years, do our resources (people, finances, physical, technical) match our mission?”
3. Leadership vitality/sustainability--asks key questions such as: How well informed is the leadership team about our goals, resources, and challenges? Is a leadership well balanced, or is it

primarily in one or two people? Who are we bringing alongside us to replace us as leaders? Who are we training to take over? The more complex the changes a congregation makes, the more critical it is to ensure that the quality of leadership is spread throughout the congregation.

By submitting this grant request, you covenant to:

- Keep the Presbytery regularly updated on the work of this ministry
- Inform the Presbytery within a timely manner should unforeseen challenges negatively impact the fruitfulness of this ministry
- Share your learning with the Presbytery so that we can grow together
- Share your successes along the way so that together we can give thanks to God
- I/we have attended the ministry plan workshop or watched the presentation online and reviewed the written summary of the workshop.

Signature

Date

Questions Regarding the Allocation of Grants

1. When do applications need to be submitted?

Application Deadlines: Applications must be received by April 1 or October 1. Funds available in October of each year will be dependent upon funds remaining after any proposal disbursements in April. Proposals will only be considered after the April deadline and will not be dealt with on a 'first come, first serve' basis.

2. Who will be responsible for assessing ministry plans?

The Presbytery has established a process for reviewing grant requests. That process is included at the end of this document. Only upon approval by the presbytery will the applicant receive funds. Applicants should be aware that the process could take two months or longer if there are issues that need to be addressed. Submitting applications well ahead of when the finances are needed is highly encouraged.

In addition to the above criteria, grants will also take into account:

- Terms of the funds held by the Presbytery
- Priorities of the Presbytery of Westminster
- Availability of funds

2. How will a 'no' be delivered?

Applications that do not receive a positive recommendation will have their application returned and may be invited to resubmit their plan addressing issues identified in their initial application. Applicants will be notified by email from the Chair of the Special Committee. Applicants should pay careful attention to the issues or concerns raised by the committee since applicants will be allowed only one rewrite.

3. What are the Presbytery timelines with respect to funding requests?

Applicants should apply for funding at least six months before the funding is required. Applications submitted in time to be considered for the October deadline and receiving a positive recommendation from the SLC will be brought to the December Presbytery meeting. Applications received in time to be considered for the April deadline and receiving a positive recommendation will be presented in the May Presbytery meeting. Applications requiring revision, can be resubmitted at anytime and will be considered during the closest deadline date.

4. What assistance is available to those seeking to request a grant?

Applicants requiring clarification on the application process are encouraged to communicate with the Chair of the Special Committee. The PMV is also available for suggestions or comments. Applicants should understand, however, that being able to produce a viable ministry plan is a basic expectation of the leadership engaging in such a ministry. For team ministries, it is expected that all team members have participated in the development of the ministry plan.

5. What are the expectations after receiving a grant?

The Presbytery will stay in communication with those with whom it is partnering, to pray for them, to offer encouragement, to provide other areas of support such as mentoring or coaching as resources allow. To maintain a consistent level of support toward success of each initiative, the presbytery will engage in an appreciative evaluation every three months to ensure early nourishment of new projects. Ideally, the Presbytery will assign one person to each project noting that while the presbytery will work to facilitate new initiatives, it is not the goal of the presbytery to manage them.

The presbytery understands that some initiatives may be moving into uncharted waters. It will be a matter of having successes and failures, both of which provide valuable learning opportunities. One of the goals of the presbytery is to become a learning presbytery. Therefore, it is expected that new initiatives will share freely and openly with the presbytery regarding what they are learning and how the presbytery can benefit from that learning.

Initiatives that receive funding from the Presbytery will be expected to regularly communicate with the Presbytery by:

- sharing what it is learning including celebrating the small victories along the way.
- identifying new challenges and opportunities it is experiencing.
- reporting any significant changes to the proposal including changes in leadership etc.
- providing full financial reporting.

One-year grants will require a final report to be submitted including a summary of the project, financials, key insights, and outcomes within four weeks after the project has been completed.

Grants requested up to three years, will be expected to provide reports at each 6-month interval. Funding assessments of the project will be made on an annual basis for projects extending beyond one-year, detailing progress in the areas of identified goals and benchmarks. A grant may be terminated because of an unreasonable extension of the time, or because of failure to implement the project as submitted in the application.

VI. Application Process

Supporting Transformational Congregations—A Three Step Application Process

A. Assumptions:

The assumptions in this process are as follows:

- The presbytery and every member within commits to seeking those initiatives it believes will be most fruitful and faithful in its witness to the redeeming love of God in Christ.
- Applicants make their application seeking the wisdom of the community of believers rather than their own personal commitment to the project.
- The process will be open and transparent.
- The application process will be grounded in the Christian value of humility meaning that
 - applicants who receive a ‘yes’ will honour their commitment to steward the resources wisely according to the application.
 - applicants who receive a ‘no’ will consider carefully the feedback provided and if desired, resubmit an application that incorporates the feedback.
- The process is open to ongoing reflection and adaptation.
- Applications will ensure they have the commitment, and not simply the compliance, of the minister, the Session, and the congregation.

B. Goals:

The application process has three goals:

- to effectively steward the resources of the presbytery in achieving its goals.
- to further develop the culture of innovation and vitality within the presbytery.
- to create a process that enables a high level of accountability without creating unnecessary barriers.

C. Steps – Establish, Engage, Evaluate

To achieve these goals, the following steps will be necessary:

1. Establish a transparent application process which highlights missional vitality/sustainability, leadership vitality/sustainability, and financial vitality/sustainability.
2. Engage the broader presbytery in the evaluation process to develop further a culture of transformation within the presbytery and provide broad involvement and feedback in the process.
3. Evaluate the vision and goals of the application through a committee of five members of the presbytery made up of three elders and two clergy. The Grant Selection Committee has the prerogative to include an additional person or persons, either from within or outside of the presbytery, who they believe may bring a particular area of expertise to a specific application to advise without vote. Two-thirds of the committee will change annually.

D. Process

1. The presbytery approves the application form and the process. These are to be reviewed annually and adjusted as needed. Evaluation will consider things such as:

- How many applications are approved or not approved? What might this feedback tell us?
- What is the average size of grants provided?
- What are the primary reasons applicants are turned down?
- What are the primary criteria used in the approval process?
- What is working well?
- What could be improved?

The evaluation process will include feedback from applicants, members of the committee, and the presbytery as whole.

2. Applicants complete the application form including the competency chart.

The applicant ensures that the application is endorsed by the minister/leader, the Session (or similar body of authority), and the congregation. This helps to convey to the Presbytery that all levels affected by the change initiative are fully aware of the initiative including costs, desired goals, risks, and commitment required.

3. The PMV reviews the applications and makes any suggestions that might be helpful. Applicants may or may not adjust their proposal based on the PMV's suggestions.

4. Applicants make a 20-minute presentation to the whole presbytery, highlighting the financial support requested, the overall vision of the project, and the goals they hope to achieve. The presbytery is given 10 minutes for questions. The presbytery responds with an online poll to three questions:

- What, if anything, did you find exciting about this initiative?
- What concerns, if any, do you have about this new initiative? (Concerns could be things such as a lack of clarity in the proposal, financial contributions required, the desired outcome, etc.)
- Do you think this is a wise use of our resources? 'yes', 'no', 'unsure'.

This feedback is gathered and made available only to the Grant Selection Committee for input to help in their review. It will not be shared with the applicant to avoid the possibility of intervening between the presbytery and the committee.

5. The committee meets and makes recommendations which may be:

- 'Yes, as is'
- 'No' explaining what changes are required, inviting resubmission if the applicant so desires.
- 'No' the application does not fit within the goals of the Presbytery, or its available resources required for the totality of its key strategies and a re-application will not be considered.

Applicants cannot appeal the decision of the committee given that the committee has thoroughly reviewed the application with the broader input of the presbytery.

VII. Committee Review – An Evaluative Tool

Below are some criteria and questions the committee may find helpful as they review applications. These are suggestions only and the committee is encouraged to review each application on its own unique merits.

The Presbytery invites applications from congregations using the following criteria. Grant requests:

- Clearly articulate the initiative including the rationale and the goal/s of the initiative
- Describe some form of measurement toward achieving those goals
- Are the initiative of the session or congregation and not simply one or two leaders
- Are missional in nature i.e. they reach out to new people in the community
- Describe the resources (time, talent, finances) the congregation is willing to invest in the new initiative/s
- Articulate how the initiative will be accountable to the Presbytery including how they will share what they have learned

Given the above criteria, the following questions will be used as guidelines in reviewing grant applications:

1. Does this proposal describe a clear vision of what it wants to achieve?
2. What need is it hoping to address? How did it discern this need?
3. Does it have any way of measuring the change it hopes to bring about?
4. Does it fit within the context, values, and vision of the congregation?
5. Does the proposal fit within or help address the strategic goals of Presbytery?
6. Is this a vision that has arisen from the congregation or the session or is it primarily the vision of one or two people?
7. Is the congregation willing to invest its own resources (time, talent, finances) in this ministry initiative?
8. In what way does this initiative understand its participation in the mission of God in the world?
9. How does this initiative relate to discipleship?
10. In what way does the congregation need the support of the Presbytery?
11. How will the initiative be accountable to the Presbytery including sharing what is learned through it?