

Transformation And Renewal Team 2019 Annual Report

The purpose of the Penn West Conference Transformation & Renewal Team is to work in consultation with COMs or other teams in helping churches and/or emerging ministries evaluate their present situation.

Over the past year we have particularly focused our work in the Juniata Association, attending their annual Consistorial Banquet and their fall meeting. We have also worked with The Abbey Reformed United Church of Christ in Huntingdon.

When we meet with churches, these are some of the questions that we ask:

- *How is your spiritual life?*
- *Do you have vital worship that is engaging?*
- *Are you a praying congregation?*
- *What are you doing for members and the entire congregation to grow spiritually?*

What do you want to be when you grow up? Living in the reality of our times, what do you imagine the best picture of your church to be?- Remember, this is NOT 1950. This is the 21st Century.

- *What is our church's greatest gift to the community?*
- *What is **your** vision/plan for your congregation ?*
- *Where do **you** see God calling your congregation now?*
- *What would you absolutely 'not' change? (the non-negotiables going forward)*
- *What would you like to see happen? (in reliance on God providing all things)*

An area where we see further need is spiritual support for pastors. COM's for the most part are overwhelmed by other business and we might assist them in this area. We also see a need for growth in financial stewardship in churches. It is a well-kept secret that financial stewardship is a spiritual matter.

Going forward, we would like to include in our vision, energy for new congregations to emerge. With this in mind, we have had a conversation with Jill White-Lay Minister, Regional Mission Interpreter for the UCC Building and Loan Fund. Jill offers workshops to churches or associations in repurposing churches. Foundational to her work is in helping existing congregations identify their "why". By our request, Jill is offering a presentation at the plenary of the Annual Meeting

in June, along with the workshop that she is offering. We want to expose Associations, clusters of churches or individual churches to this resource that would greatly benefit the entire Penn West Conference.

We also have had a conversation with Kay Albright who is the founding pastor of Bridges of Grace United Church of Christ in Charleston, WV. Kay was helpful in identifying the opportunities but also the pitfalls in establishing a new church start.

Members of the Transformation and Renewal Team are Rev. Meredith Hutchison-chairperson, Cathy Bowser-secretary, Tom Croner, Rev. June Boutwell, and Jim Neatrour, along with the ever present creative help of our Conference Minister, the Rev. David Ackerman.

Respectfully Submitted,
Meredith Hutchison