

**REPORT OF THE
TASK FORCE ON MISSION STRATEGY**

PRESBYTERY OF REDSTONE

SEPTEMBER 6, 2005

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FOREWORD

The body of this report is divided into four sections. Section 1 seeks to describe the overarching premise on which this design hinges. It also includes a very brief description of the new design. Section 2 describes the design in detail. Section 3 expresses a history of the work which produced this report. Section 4 tells how the new design came about, in terms of the previous design, and compares the new design to the previous design. The appendix lists supporting information.

1. PROPOSED MISSION STRATEGY

1.1. Theological Foundation

We affirm, above all else:

that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior; and
that He has commissioned his disciples:

“God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I’ll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20, Peterson)

We believe that Christ Jesus calls us into relationship with God and with one another. In word and in deed Jesus proclaimed this gospel of relationships as both personal and communal. As Jesus promised to be with us, so we are called to a ministry of Christ’s presence, to be with each other as we reach toward those outside the church family.

As the Church seeks to fulfill Christ’s Commission, organizational structures have been and are useful. Yet it is clear from the gospel of Jesus Christ that we risk getting our priorities reversed when we rely on our institutional structures to the lessening or exclusion of our relational nature.

Throughout scripture we learn that God has sought to call a *community* of faith into being and to nurture that community. We believe that Christ calls us together as a community of believers, a living, growing, organic body.

Because we are Christ’s body in the world, we believe that we are called to a life of mission. As Christ gave himself for others, so we are called to give of ourselves – all that we have and all that we are – in joyful obedience to God and in loving service to the world God is redeeming. Thanks be to God.

1.2. Vision Statement

Communicate the Word, Carry on the Work, and Change the World.

1.3. Mission Statement

No vision of God's calling or activity in our world is fixed and unchanging, stagnant and lifeless. We serve the living God who calls us to "new things"! Believing that our vision and understanding of God's calling is dynamic and vital (i.e. alive and growing), we offer this statement of the mission we discern for Redstone Presbytery at this time and in this place:

- To be a support and resource for vital, mission-oriented congregations within the bounds of Redstone Presbytery;
- To undertake mission projects which can most effectively be carried out only by a middle governing body, rather than by individual congregations or, on the other hand, by the General Assembly;
- And to carry out the duties of a presbytery as mandated by the *Book Of Order*.

1.4. Design Objectives

During the listening sessions, the Task Force learned that the congregations feel that Presbytery has become overly large and cumbersome, that it is not able to respond rapidly to change, that it is not able to focus on the important needs, that there is a lack of trust between some churches and Presbytery, and that the amount of support it requires from the pastors and elders is excessive.

This new design responds to these needs expressed by the congregations. It is a revolutionary change, not an evolutionary change, from the "old way of doing business." Redstone will be a leaner, more agile, more focused presbytery, building trust with the congregations, and seeking to discern and follow God's plan for this Presbytery and its churches.

It will be leaner by reducing the number of people involved for long periods in much of its work. It will be more agile by improving communications and connections between the staff and the congregations, and between the churches. It will build trust by shortening the lines of communication and developing a more robust outreach to the churches. And it will be more focused by providing trained, professional staff leadership in the three areas most important to the churches and to Presbytery:

- Mission,
- Christian Education,
- Congregational Support.

A major objective of this design is more focused mission participation by Presbytery, as it seeks to:

- Invite people with a passion for mission to serve in that way with their neighbors,
- Provide a more relational Presbytery,
- Invite all the churches to develop a stronger sense of community,
- Challenge churches to share mission projects, using their skills and experience,
- And, improve awareness of what other churches are doing in the mission field.

It is the intent of the new design for mission that Presbytery's churches will develop a new, major mission project that all the churches may cooperate in, giving life both to the mission objective and the connectional nature of Presbyterianism.

1.5. Design Summary

This Design:

- Reduces the number of standing committees of the Presbytery,
- Significantly reduces the number of members of standing committees,
- Reduces the number of stated meetings of the Presbytery from 6 to 4, annually,
- Provides for 2 district-wide meetings in each of the existing 4 districts each year, for fellowship, worship, and education purposes, to which all members of Presbytery are to be invited,
- Empowers congregations and districts, fostering the development of networks,
- Redeploys Presbytery staff in order to serve the more focused mission of the Presbytery,
- Intentionally relies on clergy and lay leaders as “adjunct staff” of presbytery to provide leadership for specific, meaningful, short-term tasks, and
- Is more streamlined, to better serve the congregations.

The Design responds positively to the desire for a Presbytery that is supportive of and helpful to vital, mission-oriented congregations as they engage in their varied ministries. It is the response of the Presbytery to the expressions voiced during the listening sessions with the congregations during the period August 2004 through April 2005.

2. THE NEW DESIGN

Ordinarily, all terms of office shall commence on January 1st.

2.1. Presbytery Structure

The structure of the Presbytery shall be fully compliant with the *Book of Order*, G-9.0900a, and shall consist of:

2.1.1. Council (for the Coordination of Mission and Program - hereinafter, “Council”), whose powers and duties shall include all those permitted by the *Book of Order* (G-11.0103 v.). Council shall consist of 12 members, six ministers and six elders, who shall be elected by the Presbytery for staggered terms of three years, not to exceed two consecutive three-year terms. In addition, it shall include a Chairperson who shall be the immediate-past moderator of the Presbytery. The Executive Presbyter, the Stated Clerk, the Moderator and Vice Moderator of Presbytery shall be ex officio (but without vote) members of Council. The standing committees of Presbytery shall report in writing to Council on a timely basis, and a representative of a standing committee may be

requested, periodically, to meet with Council in person to discuss matters of mutual interest. The members of Council shall also serve as the Trustees of the Presbytery.

Council shall appoint temporary, ad hoc task forces or teams to manage situations which, in its opinion, are better managed by a group. These task forces shall be given specific life times, in terms of dates or events, whichever is appropriate. Council shall also entertain requests to form such organizations, as a result of requests by individuals or groups to solve problems or to initiate actions, whenever it deems such action proper.

All committees and ad hoc organizations shall report through Council, and provide reports of their activities to Council, periodically, such periods to be established by Council.

2.1.2. Committee on Representation consisting of 6 members elected by the Presbytery. This committee shall continue to "...advise the governing bodies with respect to their membership, etc." per the *Book of Order*, paragraph 9.0105.

2.1.3. Committee on Ministry consisting of 22 members elected by the Presbytery. Its duties shall remain the same, except that it will cede the preparation of Authorized Lay Preachers and Commissioned Lay Pastors, and the biennial re-authorization of Authorized Lay Preachers to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. It shall continue to supervise, deploy and review, annually, the work and reports of the Commissioned Lay Pastors; and, it shall continue to review, annually, the reports of the Commissioned Lay Pastors' (minister) mentors.

The Committee on Ministry shall, in accordance with the Presbytery Manual and with three quarters of the members present approving, on behalf of Presbytery:

- Dissolve pastoral relationships in cases where the congregation and pastor concur in the request,
- Dismiss ministers to other presbyteries, and
- Find in order calls issued by churches.

The Committee On Ministry shall subsequently report all such actions at the next stated meeting of Presbytery.

It shall also:

- Approve calls for services of ministers, and recommend such approval by Presbytery at its next meeting,
- Approve the examination of ministers transferring from other presbyteries, to grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the Presbytery, and recommend such approval by Presbytery at its next meeting, giving the result of the voting within the Committee on Ministry, and:
- Appoint a commission to ordain ministers and/or install ministers in permanent pastoral relations and recommend such approval by Presbytery at its next meeting.

The Committee on Ministry shall develop a rigorous examination procedure for approving calls, and provide a summary report of this examination to Presbytery. Examples of required information could include the candidate's statement of faith, spiritual journey, background, understanding of the call, and the result of the Committee on Ministry's vote on the candidate. It should also develop a short list of questions to ask the candidates during the beginning of their examination before Presbytery.

It shall cede the oversight of churches' financial transactions presently overseen by the Committee on Ministry to the (Presbytery) Council (as Trustees).

2.1.4. Committee on Preparation for Ministry consisting of 9 members elected by the Presbytery. In addition to its present duties, this committee shall assume oversight of the preparation of Authorized Lay Preachers and Commissioned Lay Pastors, shall provide for the re-authorization of Authorized Lay Preachers, and shall represent the Presbytery in the current consortium for the preparation of Authorized Lay Preachers and Commissioned Lay Pastors, tasks previously performed by the Committee on Ministry.

2.1.5. Nominating Committee consisting of 6 members elected by the Presbytery, shall provide personnel for the standing committees of Presbytery, in accordance with *Book of Order* paragraph G-9.0800, and also to other bodies with Presbytery representation such as Pine Springs Camp, Presbyterian Media Mission, Christian Associates, Synod and General Assembly.

2.1.6. Permanent Judicial Commission consisting of 9 members elected by the Presbytery.

2.2. Presbytery Meetings

There shall be four stated meetings of the Presbytery each year (March, May, September, and November). Special meetings may be called if necessary, in the manner prescribed by the *Book of Order*. The location of meetings shall rotate among congregations who invite the Presbytery. The Council shall be responsible for establishing the dates, times, and locations of meetings; and shall propose the docket for all stated meetings of the Presbytery. This will reduce the number of annual presbytery meetings from the present six.

Each Presbytery meeting shall have an ad hoc Worship Team, selected by Council for that meeting only, whose members shall plan and implement the worship service for that meeting.

The Vice Moderator for the next year shall be elected at the November meeting of Presbytery. The Moderator and the Vice Moderator shall be installed at that same November meeting of Presbytery, to begin the functions of the office in January.

2.3. Districts

The four districts of Presbytery shall remain, as shall their boundaries.

2.3.1. District Committees

The District Committees for Congregational Development are abolished.

2.3.2. District Meetings

At least twice annually, each of the four districts of the Presbytery shall meet as a district, for the purposes of fellowship, worship, education, training, celebration, and/or informal discussion of topics of mutual concern and interest to their particular districts. For each such meeting, Council shall designate two co-host congregations from each district. Each pair of co-hosts shall be responsible to determine: meeting location, time, date, and agenda. The date of each meeting shall be coordinated through Council, so that no two districts shall meet on the same date, to permit interested parties to attend each others' meetings. However, two or more districts may choose to have a joint meeting. It is the expectation of Presbytery that at least one elder from each congregation in that District and all clergy and lay pastors serving within that District will attend their own District Meetings.

These meetings will be golden opportunities to learn from each other on topics determined by the participants. Consultants, speakers, and other leaders from outside the District may be brought in for a particular meeting, and sharing of costs shall be negotiated with the district's congregations and Council. The two district meetings will replace two of the Presbytery meetings.

2.4. Presbytery Staff

Note: This Task Force believes that its responsibility with regard to staff positions is only to define the functions to be performed, not to fill or empty those positions. However, the functions are being described in terms of positions, for clarity.

It is expected that the position of Executive Presbyter will continue at full time, the Administrative Assistant will continue at approximately 80% time, the Bookkeeper will continue at approximately 30% time, and the other four positions may require approximately half-time. Naturally, the specific time requirements may change as the positions become better defined, as determined by the staff members, Council, the Executive Presbyter and the Personnel Task Force.

2.4.1. Executive Presbyter: The Chief Administrator for the Presbytery. The position is described in the *Presbytery Manual*, paragraph 2.2000.

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2.4.2. Stated Clerk: This position is described in the *Presbytery Manual*, paragraph 2.0400. Additional duties include Recording Secretary for the Committee on Ministry, and Council, and preparation of the Action Agenda for Presbytery meetings.

2.4.3. Mission Coordinator: This person shall be the Presbytery's central human resource for communication, networking and education on mission. (It is understood that mission will be undertaken primarily by congregations and/or the General Assembly, except for special mission projects for which a middle governing body, such as a presbytery, is more suited.) This person shall be responsible for facilitating networks and connecting churches in mission projects, and will be expected to attend all district meetings and Council meetings. This person shall work with the Associate for Congregational Support to communicate mission activities of the individual churches within the Presbytery, and be a resource for planning and working with District meetings. This person will be challenged to assist the churches in identifying a presbytery-wide mission opportunity that all the churches may adopt, together.

This person shall be a positive resource for present and future mission partnerships, including disaster assistance and the Presbytery's relationships with others, such as the Sudan and Pine Springs Camp. This person's work is expected to be in the following general areas of responsibility:

- Mission,
- Stewardship,
- Evangelism,
- Staying current, by reading and performing research.

The Mission Coordinator will be expected to attend Council meetings.

2.4.4. Associate for Congregational Support: This person shall be the Presbytery's central human resource for communication, networking, and equipping for ministry and specifically shall:

- Provide communication and coordination on Ministry between congregations and relevant committees of Presbytery,
- Continue the work already begun on Church Transformation,
- Develop a new, more effective strategy for communicating information to the congregations on Presbytery activities, particularly Presbytery and district meetings,
- Develop a means whereby congregations may find common cause with Ministry projects, and thus develop informal networks,
- Be the staff resource for the Small Church Network,
- Be a resource for planning, working with, and attending district meetings.

The Associate for Congregational Support will be expected to attend Council meetings.

2.4.5. Associate for Christian Education Support: A trained Christian Educator who shall have the knowledge and skills to connect congregational leaders with resources

and resource persons. This person shall be the Presbytery's central human resource for communication, networking and education on Christian Education, and shall:

- Provide discipleship resources and methods for congregations,
- Manage the Resource Center, sustaining its catalog and on-line availability, and overseeing unpaid staff who perform the clerical maintenance tasks,
- Work with the Christian Educators in the Presbytery to assess and acquire materials and curricula,
- Work to encourage and enrich the faith lives of the congregations,
- Communicate the availability and advantages of Resource Center materials to the Congregations and the Committees of Presbytery,
- Assess the needs of the congregations and the Christian Educators,
- Be responsible for Presbyterian Youth Connection and the Triennium,
- Be a resource for planning and working with Youth Directors,
- Be a resource for planning, working with, and attending district meetings.

The Associate for Christian Education Support will be expected to attend Council meetings.

2.4.6. Associate for Pastoral Care: This person shall provide for *Book of Order* (11.0103g) responsibilities for ministers and commissioned lay pastors and their families. Specifically, the Associate for Pastoral Care will be a pastor to the pastors (Ministers of Word and Sacrament, and Commissioned Lay Pastors) and their families, and shall :

- Establish collegial relationships with them,
- Supply visitation, spiritual, social and professional support,
- Offer encouragement and
- Provide opportunities for education, networking and fellowship.

The Associate for Pastoral Care will be expected to attend Council meetings.

2.4.7. Administrative Assistant: An hourly receptionist-secretary-administrator for all clerical work undertaken in the Presbytery offices. This person shall:

- Coordinate communications, including e-mail,
- Maintain the Redstone Presbytery web-page, e-news, and printed materials,
- Provide assistance with clerical activities for the Resource Center and the Presbytery office.

2.4.8. Bookkeeper: A part time, hourly position, for maintaining accurate and timely financial reports, including funding and cash flow.

2.5. The Role of Ministers, Congregation Staff and Congregational Leaders

This Design relies on the willingness and ability of ministers and other professional congregational staff to provide periodic leadership in particular areas of their expertise and interest. This will be most apparent in planning and coordinating the District Meetings (at least 2 each year). Presbyterian polity leads us to believe that congregations

should expect such commitment and participation of professional staff in the mutual work of the wider Church.

This Design also relies on the willingness of the lay leaders in the congregations to be enthusiastic to serve on committees and task forces of the Presbytery. It should be pointed out that a pledge to serve in such a manner, once accepted, becomes an obligation which should not easily be broken. The work of Presbytery is based on the continued motivation of those who populate its committees and task forces.

Finally, this Design requires that ministers and elder commissioners to Presbytery meetings provide communication from their sessions and congregations to Presbytery, and from Presbytery back to their churches. This is essential to understanding the connectional aspect of the Presbyterian Church, and eliminating the congregationalist way of thinking that seems to exist in some congregations.

2.6. Presbytery Budget

The former Operating and Mission budgets shall be combined into one “Unified Budget for Operations and Benevolence”, with no differentiation between mission and any expenses relating to maintenance and ministry. Mission cannot be segregated from ministry, nor from maintenance, as all three are absolutely required for any one to occur.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. Task Summary

In 2004, Presbytery Council appointed a Task Force on Mission Strategy to examine the present Mission Strategy and develop a new Mission Strategy if needed. After due discussion and much prayer, this Task Force decided to undertake a major study involving all the churches and the staff of the Presbytery. This report presents the study leading to the new Mission Statement, the Statement itself, and a Design for the Presbytery’s overall Mission Strategy. It also describes the methodology and lists the names of the volunteers who were engaged in this work.

3.2. History Of The Task

The present Mission Statement was adopted on November 17, 1998, for use during the period 1999-2004.

At its February 2004 meeting, Presbytery Council elected to have “...The Moderator of Council appoint a subcommittee to review our Mission Strategy and to help us discern where we are going. The subcommittee is to take 6-9 months to evaluate the effectiveness of the current strategy and how we are living that out.” (From the minutes of that council meeting.) Accordingly, the present Task Force on Mission Strategy was formed, and held its first meeting on March 31, 2004.

The members of the Task Force studied the present Mission Statement, and after much discussion and prayer, agreed that the foundation and direction of the Presbytery's Mission Statement should be thoroughly reevaluated. They further agreed that much of the information they would require would be found in the member churches.

The members of the Task Force, then, at their meeting on May 27, 2004, decided to visit the leaders of all the churches in the presbytery to solicit their opinions, suggestions and requirements. A letter was sent to all pastors and clerks of session, explaining this task, and asking them to invite members of this Task Force to come for "listening sessions", to hear their requirements and suggestions. This strategy, obviously, would greatly increase the amount of work, and therefore time, required for the Task Force to complete its work. Accordingly, Presbytery Council was petitioned to move the work deadline to September 2005, to which it agreed.

A brief questionnaire was developed, and included with the letters. This questionnaire appears later, as Appendix I, with a summary of the responses.

During the period August, 2004 through April, 2005, visits were made to 57 churches and other entities in the presbytery, by two-person teams from this Task Force. In addition, four pastors' luncheons were held. Seventeen pastors, whose congregations did not participate in the visits, attended these luncheons, and were able to provide information. In effect, 74 of the 86 churches were represented in this canvas. In addition, exempt members of the staff of Presbytery were solicited for their suggestions and comments.

The Task Force met as a whole for a retreat at Pine Springs Camp, on April 12, 2005, to worship together, to review the presbytery requirements from the *Book of Order*, to share insights gleaned from the visits, and to start to develop a rationale for an updated Mission Strategy for Redstone Presbytery. Further meetings were held on an approximately bi-weekly basis, during the period May through August, 2005, during which the Mission Design and this report were developed.

3.3. The Greatest Learning

The Task Force's greatest learning has come in the process followed, rather than from the multitude of information bits gathered. For the vast majority of the work, the members intentionally engaged in in-person interviews and personal presence at listening sessions with representatives of those congregations who invited them, rather than relying on written questionnaires and other less personal means of collecting information. These personal conversations were of greater importance and value in seeking to be effective and faithful disciples in the work, than any other bit of information gathered, or common theme identified.

That learning has profound implications for this Presbytery in the future. It presents a challenge to rely less on institutional structures, and more on the cultivation and nurture of personal relationships in the search to be faithful to Christ's Commission. The design for Presbytery's mission, which is suggested by this learning, should maximize opportunities for individual congregations and the Presbytery to identify common

challenges and come together as a single community of faith to discover ways to best meet those challenges. The real value of the Presbytery is in facilitating that process in both an effective and efficient manner. This learning is a direct reflection of the Theological Foundation which undergirds this report.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

The members of the Task Force wish to express their heartfelt appreciation to the pastors and lay leaders of the 57 congregations who gave of their valuable time and insight by participating in the listening sessions. It is the intention of the Task Force that this Design respond to the needs and requirements expressed in those meetings.

During the listening visits, many of the congregations' representatives spoke of Presbytery as being a large, complex burden being borne by the, often small, congregations. Many felt (incorrectly) that its predominant function was to rule the churches, and, occasionally, close them. This is NOT the view of the *Book of Order*, nor of those who labor as staff or volunteers in this Presbytery. The main function of Presbytery is to help the congregations grow in their faith and in their observance of the Great Commission. Presbyterians believe that they are part of a connectional Church, because they are part of Christ's body, in that they intentionally seek to establish and cultivate relationships between individuals, congregations and presbyteries, in order to provide mutual support in their endeavors.

The existing organization of this Presbytery was based on conditions from ten to twenty years ago. Today, many of those conditions have changed:

- There are fewer congregations, now;
- Most of the congregations are smaller, some are very small;
- Society has become less inclined to faithful stewardship;
- And, in many cases, there is even more need for mission outreach.

This design is intended to make this Presbytery more responsive to the needs of the churches by becoming:

- Simpler – with fewer committees, fewer layers of committees, and fewer committee members,
- More focused – by placing decision-making closer to the action,
- More agile – by reducing overhead and simplifying its structure,
- More friendly – by being closer to the churches.

At the same time, it is not the intent of this Task Force to attempt to rewrite the *Book of Order*.

The following discussion details the specific reasoning and consequences of the new design.

4.1. The Presbytery and Its Committees

A foremost element of this design is the major streamlining of Presbytery's committee structure. Many of the congregations in this Presbytery (and, nationally) have become smaller, and therefore can no longer afford full-time, called and installed ministers. As a result, there are fewer pastors available for committee duty, and fewer pastors who are passionate to serve the committees or the functions those committees seek to perform. Presbytery's present committee structure imposes a time burden on those pastors willing to accept committee duty, reducing their willingness to agree to serve, their time available to serve, and their ability to serve their congregations. This design specifies a wholesale reduction in the number and size of the Presbytery's standing committees, keeping only those that are mandated by the *Book of Order*. Functions formerly performed by the other committees and still deemed as required are, in some cases given to the mandated committees, and in other cases may be assigned to ad hoc units (task forces or teams) as the need arises. These ad hoc units would have a limited life time, quickly returning their members to the availability pool, and not requiring long-term commitment.

This design permits Presbytery to establish a very strong emphasis on placing people in positions where they feel a passion: where they are most likely to have a compelling outcome and sense of accomplishment. It also reduces the effective number of committee slots and representation requirements giving Presbytery more flexibility in finding people to fill positions for which they have that passion.

Council will, from time to time, initiate establishment of ad hoc task forces to deal with issues as they occur. Furthermore, individuals or groups of like-minded individuals, may petition Council to recognize their interests or concerns by establishing working groups for them to fulfill their specific needs. There are many mission projects being run by individual churches which could benefit by being shared with other churches, for example. This sharing could benefit the congregations, which would receive increased support for their missions, and also, through the fellowship of additional congregations, increased support for their faith journeys. The new staff members may discern interest in projects that churches may wish to come together to work on, and will be able to motivate the people with those interests to speak with each other and with Council about networking.

4.2. The Mandated Presbytery Committees

Several committees are required by the *Book of Order*, paragraph G-9.0902:

"Structures specified within this Constitution are:...

A council for the coordination of mission and program (G-11.0103v)

Committee on Representation (G-9.0105, G-11.0302)

Committee on Ministry (G-11.0500, G-14.0502)

Committee on Preparation for Ministry (G-14.0300)

Nominating Committee (G-9.0800, G-11.0103w)

Permanent Judicial Commission (D-5.0000)."

4.2.1. Presbytery Council

Council has historically consisted of the chairs of the standing committees. In this design, Council will be smaller, and fully representative of the Presbytery, like the session of a church. The responsibility of trustee has been folded in to Council, eliminating another committee. All standing committees will report through Council. All ad hoc committees (task forces and teams) seeking endorsement by Presbytery will also report through Council. As this design more closely resembles the organization and operation of an individual church, it should become less foreign, less “different” to the members of the congregations.

4.2.1.1. Task Force on Mission Strategy

This is an ad hoc committee of Council, itself a mandated committee, formed to develop this design. As all ad hoc groups under this design, it will disappear when its work (this report) is completed and accepted.

4.2.2. Committee on Representation

This committee will remain as is, in keeping with its mandate to implement the Church’s commitment to inclusiveness and participation, as stated in the *Book of Order* paragraph G-4.0403.

4.2.3. Committee on Ministry

This committee will remain as it is, with 22 members. As the *Book of Order* mandates a heavy responsibility to this committee, two of its current responsibilities have been shifted to other committees, specifically: elements of preparation for lay preachers and pastors will be assigned to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and authorization of churches to perform some financial transactions will be assigned to Council, acting as Trustees.

There has been a sense that people attending Presbytery meetings do not have sufficient information to make informed judgments about (and therefore vote on) calls to pastors, and rely mostly on the Committee on Ministry. For this reason, the Committee on Ministry will provide information about candidates for calls, including personal and professional information, as well as the results of voting at the Committee on Ministry’s meeting, while introducing candidates at Presbytery meetings.

4.2.3.1. Strategy for Ministry Development Team

This is an ad hoc sub-committee of the Committee on Ministry, which is a mandated committee, which will dissolve at a time Council chooses, probably after the Associate for Congregational Support has become a member of staff. Its major thrust has been understanding and promoting “Church-wide Transformation.” This program seeks to

teach elders and other lay leaders to be the spiritual leaders of their churches. Members of this organization have attended several of the national conferences on this subject, and have been making appeals for others to attend in the future, at recent meetings of Presbytery. This committee organized and ran a workshop within the Presbytery in April, 2005, which was attended by many leaders. The work that this committee initiated will continue under the leadership of the Associate for Congregational Support, with help from ad hoc units as required.

4.2.4. Committee on Preparation for Ministry

This committee will continue to perform its mandated duties, per *Book of Order* paragraph G14.0300, and, in addition, will absorb two of the preparation tasks previously assigned to the Committee on Ministry: oversight of the preparation of Authorized Lay Preachers and Commissioned Lay Pastors, by representing the Presbytery in the current consortium for the educational functions, and reauthorizing of Authorized Lay Preachers. Its decisions would, of course, be reported at the next meeting of Presbytery.

4.2.5. Nominating Committee

This committee will continue to function as is, selecting individuals for the standing committees of Presbytery, plus those representing Presbytery to other organizations, such as Pine Springs Camp, Presbyterian Media Mission, Christian Associates, Synod and General Assembly. (Selecting individuals for ad hoc task forces will be the responsibility of Council.)

4.2.6. Judicial Commission

This commission will remain as is.

4.3. **The Other Committees**

Those committees that are not mandated will no longer exist as standing committees, being part of the streamlining effort. There may be ad hoc working groups brought together for specific times or to complete a specific mission, by Council, as the need arises.

4.3.1. Ethics

This may be replaced with an ad hoc task force called into being as Council determines the need.

4.3.2. Mission Committee

This committee will no longer exist as a standing committee of Presbytery. The Task Force recommends that the Presbytery's emphasis be to encourage and empower congregations in mission, linking together those individuals and churches with the

passion, experience and expertise for mission work and trips. The District Meetings will provide the opportunities for congregations to work together to develop shared mission projects, with the new staff persons, particularly the Mission Coordinator, as facilitators.

Presbytery, through its Council, will focus on a few mission projects that can best be accomplished by the Presbytery as a whole, such as Pine Springs Camp, and the Sudan partnership, and will seek an opportunity for a mission in which all churches may join together, establishing a Presbytery-wide major mission project.

4.3.3. Personnel Committee

An ad hoc task force will be formed when needed, possibly to help with annual reviews, searches to fill staff positions, etc. The chair of this task force will be an elected member of Council. Day to day staff operations will be overseen by the Executive Presbyter. Personnel matters involving the Executive Presbyter may be brought to Council.

4.3.4. Social Concerns Committee

This may be replaced with an ad hoc task force called into being as Council determines the need.

4.3.5. Worship

This committee will no longer exist as a standing committee, as Council will appoint an ad hoc task force to develop the worship service for each Presbytery meeting.

4.3.6. Trustees

The work of the Board of Trustees will be performed by Council, as in most churches.

4.3.7. Presbyterian Youth Connection Council

This will no longer be a standing committee, but ad hoc task forces will be formed by Council as needed.

4.3.8. District Committees for Congregational Development

The District Committees will be dissolved to permit a closer relationship between Presbytery and the churches, and more dialogue between the churches (See 4.6.1, District Committees)

4.4. Committees' Summary Table

The following table compares the numbers of required committees and committee members in the previous design against those in the new design.

Committee	Previous Design	<i>Book of Order</i>	New Design
	Members	Mandated	Members
Council	20	YES	12
Task Force on Mission Strategy	10	NO	
Committee on Representation	6	YES	6
Committee on Ministry	22	YES	22
Strategy for Ministry Development Team	6	NO	
Committee on Preparation for Ministry	9	YES	9
Nominations Committee	6	YES	6
Judicial Commission	9	YES	9
Ethics Committee	6	NO	
Mission Committee	9	NO	
Personnel Committee	6	NO	
Social Concerns Committee	6	NO	
Worship Committee	6	NO	
Trustees	9	NO	
PYC	8	NO	
District Committees	36	NO	
Total Members	174		64

4.5. Presbytery Meetings

Two of the six annual Presbytery meetings have been eliminated. Instead, two sets of district meetings have been added, to reinforce the aim of this design to provide for improved networking opportunities among the churches.

There is a perception that Presbytery meetings are over long. This may come as a result of some of the presbyters not understanding the function, and therefore the requirements, of a deliberative body. It may also come from a lack of knowledge about some of the topics being deliberated, especially calls for ministers. Brief biographies and statements of faith will be supplied for candidates for ordination and for ministers receiving calls within this Presbytery, and the representative (usually the Chair) of the Committee on Ministry will introduce the candidates with selected pertinent information and begin the examination by one or more questions about the candidate's faith journey, statement of faith, last pastorate, etc.

A part of the apparent lack of interest in Presbytery meetings, by some, may be due to not understanding the background of the issues being discussed. To ensure that all presbyters

are able to become fully informed of the issues before Presbytery, Presbytery staff will prepare that portion of the handout materials dealing with items the presbyters must approve two weeks before the scheduled Presbytery meeting. This material is to be distributed by e-mail to those able to receive e-mail, and by Postal Service to those churches that do not have that capability.

The Task Force further suggests giving more time to describing interesting witness events in the lives of the churches and networks, thereby reinforcing the connectional nature of the PC(USA), and removing some of the mystery surrounding “other” churches. Examples might be specific mission opportunities, both on-going and in planning, and news from individual congregations, such as the moving presentation about the union to form New Hope Church, at the May 17, 2005 Presbytery meeting.

Some members of our congregations indicated that it is not always convenient for them to attend Presbytery meetings, due to work schedules, etc. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a good time when everyone would be able to attend. Already, Presbytery shifts the times for its meetings, hoping that all people can attend some of the time. As previously mentioned, the number of Presbytery meetings will be reduced from the current six, to four, and in their place, two meetings will be held at the district level. These district meetings will provide additional flexibility in schedule and location, and permit more discussions between churches on subjects of their own choosing. These are not to be “closed” meetings - all members of Presbytery are to be invited to attend every district meeting.

4.6. Districts

The four Districts are based on their geography. They appear appropriate, and will remain as they are.

4.6.1. District Committees

The district committees seemed to interpose an unnecessary layer of committees between the churches and Presbytery, and did not seem to improve the ability of churches to develop networks to allow them to work together.

As part of the objectives of shortening communications lines and reducing the structure of the standing committees, the Task Force recommends abolishing the District Committees for Congregational Development as formal structures.

4.6.2. District Meetings

In place of the district committee meetings, there will be two district meetings (of all the churches in that district) per year for each district, for an overall total of eight such meetings, assuming no joint meetings. Representation at these meetings should be the same as presbytery meetings: all clergy and lay pastors in the district and at least one elder from each church. The district meetings will be managed and scheduled by

members of the two churches selected by Council to host them, as will their agendas. Those churches will coordinate the dates of their meetings through Council, to avoid scheduling meetings on the same date as any other districts, which could prevent members of other districts from attending. They should announce their meeting schedule and agenda to the Presbytery at large, encouraging members of other districts to attend as the time and agendas match their abilities and interests.

Each district will be encouraged to develop networks to work together to demonstrate the connectional nature of this Church, to form ad hoc groups, and to work on relevant items of their own choosing, wherever the passion drives them.

Planning for each of these meetings will be up to the pairs of churches who will be running them, who will be assisted by the three new staff persons. This should become a smaller, less formal gathering, providing a better opportunity for bonds to develop between the congregations.

4.7. Presbytery Staff

The previous design includes a full-time Executive Presbyter, a full-time Consultant for Congregational Services, a part-time Stated Clerk, a part-time Associate for Pastoral Care, a part-time Secretary and a part-time Bookkeeper.

The churches identified the need for support in three specific functions, and, therefore, require staff persons with the passion, training and experience in those specific areas. All other staffing will remain as is.

4.7.1. Executive Presbyter

As the chief executive, the Executive Presbyter performs the very valuable role of managing the day-to-day operations of Presbytery, and being the first responder to most emergencies within Presbytery. Under the new, streamlined design, with fewer committees and committee members, that role will become even more vital. It should remain a full-time position.

4.7.2. Consultant for Congregational Services

The Task Force recommends that three part-time functions replace this full-time position, as the fields of expertise required are quite specific, and are rarely found in one individual.

4.7.3. Stated Clerk

This is a mandated function, and is therefore required. This position provides much of the “glue” which holds the presbytery together.

4.7.4. Mission Coordinator

A key objective of this design is to strengthen the mission initiatives of the churches and Presbytery. In addition to reorganization to promote mission, a staff person is required to provide a focus on, and knowledge of, the way Presbyterians may respond to the needs of others.

4.7.5. Associate for Congregational Support

To maximize the effect of increased attention to mission, individual churches need to become allied with other churches, becoming networks for mission. Also, the Presbyterian Church has a fundamental belief that all of its members need to work together to reinforce their faith and commitment. The churches of this Presbytery need leadership to help them learn to work together.

4.7.6. Associate for Christian Education Support

Christian Education has always been, and must remain, one of the highest priorities of Presbyterian churches. A staff person with a passion for Christian Education, and training and experience in that field, is required for Presbytery to provide adequate support to the churches.

4.7.7. Associate for Pastoral Care

The position of Associate for Pastoral Care, while not visible to all congregations, has had a major impact on many of the pastors and their families. It is also a drawing card for those from other presbyteries who are considering calls within this Presbytery. The Task Force recommends maintaining this position.

4.7.8. Secretary

Even with the reduced committee structure, there will still be a large volume of administrative tasks to be performed. With the added dependence on the leadership, and the additional staff members, this work will remain very important, and may require more time.

4.7.9. Bookkeeper

Presbytery will always require a transparent set of financial statements.

4.8. Presbytery Resource Center

The Presbytery Resource Center is used – and appreciated – by many congregations. Since this fulfills, primarily, a Christian Education function, the Task Force recommends maintaining this valuable resource, and recommends that a person, with passion for and

training and experience in Christian Education, be acquired to manage that set of responsibilities: the Associate for Christian Education Support.

The Task Force recommends that the catalog of the Resource Center be made available on-line, through Presbytery's web-site, and that periodicals dealing with the PC(USA) be acquired and cataloged (see 4.11.2. Information from the Media).

The Task Force recommends that a list of all scheduled evening meetings planned for the Presbytery Office be placed on Presbytery's web-site so that individuals wishing to pick up Resource Center materials in the evening may find out when it will be open.

4.9. Mission Giving and Presbytery Funding

While the congregations are very generous in supporting mission ministries close to their own homes and hearts, they often have less enthusiasm for supporting those mission projects identified by Presbytery as deserving, particularly as the list of projects in the mission budget tends to include many small projects that do not always evoke strong, positive passions among the congregations. Many have stated that they would welcome suggestions for mission from Presbytery, but that they, generally, would prefer not to provide major mission funds through Presbytery.

The members of the Task Force recommend that more emphasis be placed on the major mission projects of the presbytery, and that the smaller projects be abandoned. Hence, this Presbytery will severely limit the funding of Mission to only those it feels are appropriate to a larger body, and, instead, exhort the churches to give directly to the missions of their choice. In addition, the Task Force exhorts the churches to identify a major mission project for their collective collaboration.

There also seems to be a belief that mission workers should receive their compensation from outside the mission funding mechanism, or else they should receive no compensation. When one engages a person to work, it is the responsibility of the engaging body or person to see that the person who is engaged be provided with the necessities of life: food, shelter, and clothing. If that person is engaged in mission, then the cost of providing those necessities must be part of the mission.

There has also been confusion between "Mission" and "Ministry." "Mission", some tend to think, only happens out of sight, while the same actions or effects happening nearby are called "Ministry." Jesus' call to faithful discipleship did not include references to how far away the discipleship must be. Nor did Luke (17:1-10) write in terms of leagues and cubits. A third variable, "Maintenance" seems to get in the way, also. It must be understood that all three functions: mission, ministry, and maintenance must exist, otherwise, none will exist. To categorize one item as being essential and the others as being non-essential or even selfish, is not logical.

This Presbytery has, for some years, defined two sources of income and expense, each having a separate budget: one based on per capita, and one on mission. The per capita

budget is viewed by some as a “tax”, or a required payable item. Mission is defined by some as “something we do for others”, or an optional payable item. This has been helpful to some of the churches, as it permits them to identify the amount of funds they provide “for others.” The reality of the situation, however, is that without “Ministry” and “Maintenance”, “Mission” cannot occur. Mission, therefore, was the result of both budgets, which will now be combined into one: the “Unified Budget for Operations and Benevolence.”

4.10. Knowledge of Presbyterian Polity

4.10.1. The Role of Elders

It was noted that many elders have a strong loyalty to their local church, but that commitment does not necessarily extend to the Presbyterian Church as a whole, nor to the Great Commission. This appears to follow from a lack of understanding that the role of the elder is to be a spiritual leader. The task force recommends that pastors increase their effort to train elders in spiritual leadership and Presbyterian polity. Elders need to be committed disciples who are training others in discipleship. To that end, elders should be encouraged to be in daily prayer and reflection and in regular Bible study. Pastors should also plan to attend, and urge leaders in their congregations to attend, future Church-Wide Transformation workshops.

4.10.2. Information from the Media

Much of the information about the workings and issues within the PC(USA) may be coming from sources outside the “mainstream.” The Task Force recommends that elders – and all church members, for that matter – be encouraged to explore a more balanced approach to information gathering, by using the official PC(USA) website and such publications as “The Presbyterian Outlook” and “Presbyterians Today.”

The Task Force recommends that the Resource Center acquire and catalog copies of periodicals relating to the PC(USA), and publicize their presence.

4.11. Communications

Presbytery is using many of the modern methods of communicating with the congregations. The Redstone Record, the Presbytery web-site, and e-mails to pastors and clerks of session are all “tried and true” methods of getting “the word” out. Still, the congregations are having difficulty understanding what Presbytery does, how it does it, and who it is. Much of this may be due to the long lines of communication and the large committee structure under which Presbytery has been seen to be operating. By simplifying the structure of Presbytery, some communications may be improved.

But, that will probably not be nearly enough. The Task Force recommends that Presbytery undertake a separate effort to improve the way it communicates with the churches. This undertaking is beyond the scope of the present Task Force, and beyond its

expertise and knowledge. Perhaps the way facts are being conveyed no longer meets the present test for excitement? Maybe a different writing style would capture more readers and listeners? Perhaps there are other avenues Presbytery could employ without major increases in their cost? Perhaps Council could find people who have a passion for communication who could form a Task Force to develop an initiative for this need.

4.12. Presbytery Ambassadors

Many of the congregations seem to feel disconnected from the Presbytery. An effort should be undertaken by Presbytery to reach out to all congregations and let the people in the pews know there is a Presbytery, and that their Presbytery cares for them. During the listening sessions, the concept of someone being “The face of Presbytery” was heard quite often, indicating a strong thirst for personal contact. The Task Force, therefore, recommends the creation of a new set of volunteer positions, to be known as Presbytery Ambassadors. Their role would be to attend worship services and, when appropriate, other meetings of the congregations, to listen and to give brief greetings from Presbytery, and to let each church’s congregation know that it is important to this Presbytery, and that its congregants are cared for.

Council could appoint a task force to develop a training class, and see that volunteers are appointed and trained.

4.13. Presbytery Budget

Implementing this design is expected to have only minor consequences to the dollar amounts in the budget. Much of the expenditures for those standing committees which are being disbanded may be recovered for use elsewhere.

The changes in staff positions may cause minor changes to the budget, depending on how the new staff persons are acquired, and under what terms. The main difference will be changing from one full time staff person to three part-time staff persons.

The Task Force feels very strongly that mission cannot be segregated from ministry, nor from maintenance, as all three are absolutely required for any one to occur. They are indivisible. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that the Expense Budgets be combined, with no differentiation between mission and any other expenses relating to maintenance and ministry. This could be known as the “Unified Budget for Operations and Benevolence.”

APPENDICES

1. SUMMARY OF THE LISTENING SESSIONS

This section's format is based on the "standard" questionnaire used by the visitors.

If you could create the ideal Presbytery, what would it be like?

This question was probably the most enlightening question for us in that for the most part, we were met with something on the order of "We can't really answer that, because we don't know what the Presbytery is."

Some of the comments (perceptions) about the Presbytery were as follows:

- "the office in Greensburg"
- "those people who tell us what to do"
- "Big Brother"
- "the Black Cloud hanging over us"
- "They" or "You people that dictate to us"
- "Something big out there somewhere"
- "It is way up there and we are way down here."
- "the paid staff"
- "the meeting that is held every other month"

There were other churches that were very connected to the Presbytery and understood its function and their relationship to it. Their perceptions of the Presbytery were as follows:

- "made up of representatives from all our churches; sets policy with input from us."
- "the 86 churches and the 17,000 people who make up our churches"
- "You are asking us to comment on ourselves?"
- "Presbytery is defined as the church itself."
- "It is the means by which we are connected."
- "a unifying, leadership body"
- "all 86 churches getting along working toward one specific goal"
- "Our Presbytery is a class act."
- "Ideally, Presbytery is Big Brother, which can be very helpful."

Very few churches came up with an "ideal" Presbytery, but this question generated lots of questions and discussion and we found ourselves giving as much information as we were getting with this topic and the bullet points that went with it. A few comments were as follows:

- "A minimalist approach to the congregations".
- "There is a constant tension that goes on between local churches and their governing bodies.... There are times when the Presbytery is trying to serve the local churches, but it can become local churches serving the Presbytery. Local

churches are where the action is. The tension is always there. How far can we go and still be servants? At what point do we begin dictating? Presbytery should strive to serve the local churches.”

- “Completely turn around the hierarchy....The local churches would be in control and the other agencies (Presbytery, Synod and GA) would support the work of the local church.”
- “We have lost the sense of community. Community is a good goal to have. Knowing each other...feeling part of a group that shares a common interest, support for needs or problems both personal and church-wide.”
- More concentration on mission and evangelism was heard more than once.

What would its purpose/mission be?

Some churches saw “purpose” and “mission” as the same thing; others did not.

- “support the churches”
- “an arm to carry out mission”
- “We want the Presbytery, ideally, to inspire us, educate us and equip us. Of course, we need to be more open to inspiration, education and equipping!”
- “guide and direct the churches and the ministers who serve them”
- “We look to Presbytery for general guidance and proper procedures.”
- support individual churches to build them and their leadership. Help with connection and growth and mission education.
- govern the local churches, be a resource for all types of information, represent us to the Synod and General Assembly
- help with financial support was heard several times
- “should be a nurturer of congregations. A caretaker.”
- “It should meet all the needs of all the churches in the Presbytery, whatever those needs may be.” *Needs were listed in different ways depending on the perceived needs of that congregation.*
- “connect people to Christ and reconnect them when they fall away.” Good preaching and teaching.
- mutual accountability – a strength of connectionality – a partnership – a force to help hold the denomination together – a voice to stabilize things – create solidarity in what Presbyterians hold as essential – unifying.
- “take care of us, look out for us and keep us in line.”
- “protect us when we are in trouble”
- sharing of resources and talents across the Presbytery
- a channel, a facilitator, a resource

What would it do?

This question overlapped the previous question. We heard churches asking for the following:

- Presbytery should be a facilitator. Churches want the Presbytery to “show us what other churches are doing...especially in mission.”
- Presbytery should be a resource. Churches want the Presbytery to offer resources in the form of material resources and personnel resources.
- Presbytery should be our overseer. Churches want a pastor in the pulpit on a Sunday morning.
- Presbytery needs to be a rescuer. Churches want Presbytery to “take the heat off them” when they get in difficult situations. (both financial and ethical situations)
- Presbytery should be a representative. Churches want the Presbytery to represent them to the larger church.

What ideally would be the nature of your congregation’s relationship to it?

- We would attend meetings.
- Comment from a Pastor: “We would have a lay representative at each Presbytery meeting in addition to the Pastor.”
- We would be in better communication: “We (elders) are supposed to be the connection between Presbytery and the congregation.”
- Comment from a Pastor: “We (the pastors) are dropping the ball” (*at getting the information from the Presbytery back into our sessions and congregations*).
- We could have larger churches helping smaller churches.
- “We need a greater relationship with the rest of the Presbytery.”
- Individual churches would be more involved in programs.
- “We need to study the issues more.”
- We would feel more connected to the other congregations.
- Collegial
- We would be more concerned (as a local congregation) about the larger church.
- A more closely knit partnership.

What staff would it need?

We came to think of this question in terms of the “Goldilocks” fairy tale. A few churches think the staffing is too big, a few think the staffing is too small, but a large majority of the churches feel that the staffing is very good as it stands.

- There was almost a unanimous opinion that we need to have an Executive Presbyter, a Stated Clerk, a Secretary and a part-time Bookkeeper.
- “Staffing is fine, but we need them in the evening.”
- “We have CLP’s who have “real jobs” that need the office, resource center and staff available at least one evening a week”.
- Each church needs a contact person.
- The positions that were sometimes questioned were:
 - Consultant for Congregational Programming and Associate for Pastoral Care.

- The smaller churches generally felt a great need for the Consultant for Congregational Programming and especially for the Resource Center.
- The larger churches generally did not feel the same need for these services.
- As for the Associate for Pastoral Care, those churches and pastors who had an occasion to need this kind of support seemed to find it tremendously helpful. Churches that had not been in difficulty did not see the need of it.
- Several churches wanted more staff:
 - Public Relations person
 - Mission Coordinator
 - Information Technology person
 - Youth Director
 - More clerical staff
- Pastor's comment: "We are staffed to fail. Our expectation is greater than we can accomplish with what we have. So instead of celebrating what we have, we lament what we don't. It's a money issue. We don't want per capita to go up."

What money would be needed to fund this *ideal* presbytery?

- "LOTS!"
- "Not a clue"
- More than we are willing to spend.
- Don't raise the per capita.

How would money needed for this *ideal* Presbytery be secured?

The answer to this was almost exclusively per capita and mission giving (or a tongue-in-cheek answer to "win the lottery, but don't gamble to do it!")

How has Redstone been involved in the Maintenance, Ministry and Mission of your congregation?

- Some churches could think of nothing the Presbytery has ever done for them.
- The list from other churches was extensive. Help from Presbytery came in the following forms:
 - Numerous roofs
 - Parking lots
 - Windows
 - Doors
 - Fire Damage repair
 - Rewiring of buildings
 - Christian Educators
 - Pastor Nominating Committees
 - Pastors—Installed clergy, Stated Supplies, Interims, ALP's and CLP's
 - Ordained Presbytery staff fills in for baptisms and communions when needed
 - Help with polity
 - Resource center

- Conflict resolution
- Teacher training
- Elder and Deacon training
- Training for Clerks of Session
- Programs on Church Transformation
- Programs on being a Welcoming Church
- Small Church Network
- Wee Kirk Conference
- Mission opportunities
 - Mexico
 - Sudan
- Youth opportunities
 - Pine Springs
 - Triennium
 - Gateway clipper cruises
 - Presbyterian Youth Connection
- Pastoral travel reimbursement
- Review of records
- Tax exempt status
- Help with legal problems
- Helped with computer class
- Funds for church relocation
- Money to start a Food Bank
- Mission Grant for 6:15 project
- Help with mission trip to Mexico
- Pastor went to TASTE
- Computer
- “Come In Out of the Cold” campaign
- Help with church mergers
- Help with a financial “snafu”
- Help with transitions
- Support for those called to ministry
- Money, education and experience for CLPs
- Redstone Highlands
- “our security blanket”
- “We feel we aren’t working alone.”
- “I like being a part of a connectional church. There is a heavy weight of personal accountability to being a pastor.” This pastor liked having the support of brothers and sisters in Christ.

Some churches had unresolved hurt with how Presbytery had been involved with them in what were perceived to be negative ways. Some of these issues we heard about went back almost 50 years.

- Yokes that didn't work
- PNCs that had difficulties
- Churches that were encouraged to close
- Controls over financial issues that were resented
- Too much lag time for help with problems

How have you/your congregation been involved with the Maintenance, Ministry and Mission of Redstone?

- Per Capita
- General Mission Pledge
- Seasonal offerings - OGHS, Pentecost offering, Christmas Joy, Hunger Fund, etc.
- Presbyterian Women
- Send representatives to Presbytery meetings
- Presbytery moderators come from local churches
- Serve on Presbytery Committees and boards
- Host Presbytery meetings
- Attend workshops
- Pulpit exchanges
- Mission projects
- Work at Pine Springs Camp

Some churches both large and small had almost no involvement at all with the Presbytery.

One larger church made the comment that for years they were so big they didn't think they needed the other churches. In retrospect, "In a way maybe that made us the smallest church in the Presbytery."

Several small churches said they prefer to "fly under the radar" for fear they will be noticed and the Presbytery will try to close them.

How would you define mission? How are you and your church carrying out this mission?

"Mission" is something we all seem to recognize when we see it, but it is difficult to define. Most churches found the definition being used by the Task Force to be acceptable.

"That which a congregation does with and for those outside the constituency of the church to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus with the hope of bringing wholeness to life and growing the community of faith."

Some other input:

- Mission is inside the church too.
- Mission is more than writing a check. It needs to be hands on. Dirty hands.
- People need to feel ownership in mission.
- Everything the church does is mission.-Why do we have a separate mission budget?
- Mission means “to be sent”: Why? To bring good news of Christ to those who don’t know.
- Churches want to control their money and use it on the local level as an outreach.
 - “I have a hard time paying staff out of the mission budget. Especially with this definition.”
- “Redstone’s per capita is one of the lowest. Raise it by \$5 and get the salaries out of the mission budget. They are hurting mission giving.”
- Mission makes the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy church.
- Mission is our purpose in being.
- “Help whomever you can in whatever way you can and wherever they may be. Conversion is not the point. Meeting human need is.”
- “Take Christ with you when you walk out the door of the church... You are the face, smile, hands and voice of Christ.”
- Mission and evangelism can be working hand in hand. Most of the time we don’t know it.
- “Teach God’s word, Love God’s people, Heal God’s people.”
- “If we aren’t doing this for Jesus, then we are just another service club. We are not being the salt to the world. There has to be something different about us and that is Jesus.”

How are you carrying out mission?

This list is far too long to include in this report. See “Redstone Record” Vol. XII, Issue 3, June 2005, p.3. “Mission the Reflection of Christ in Redstone”.

Multiple churches asked that the Presbytery be a facilitator in helping churches to know what other churches are doing in mission. Churches also wanted to work together with other churches on mission projects. To this end three more sites have been added to the Web Page (www.Redstone.org). Congregations can share what they are doing, see what others are doing and invite other churches to go together on mission projects.

How does all of this reflect the work of Jesus Christ?

- Everything we do reflects how Jesus is involved in our lives.
- “I watch people coming back to the church after years away. It proves it is more than words, it is a life thing.”
- “Sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn’t. We fade in and out.”
- “The church is a work in progress.”
- Jesus worked with groups. We are called to work in community. Presbytery is a part of that.”

- We're doing what he asked us to do...It's the commandment. This is Christ's work. It's always been Christ's work."
- The Father sends the Son, the Son sends the Spirit, the Spirit sends us."
- "How does this reflect the work of Jesus? Humbly. We hope it reflects well."

Other concerns:

1. Several churches felt there is a disconnect between the Presbytery and the local church.
2. There is a huge lack of communication between the Presbytery and the local church. Most churches didn't know about the web page, E-news and don't read the "Redstone Record."
3. Most Sessions are not reading a recap of Presbytery business.
4. Some churches are sending elder commissioners who no longer serve on Sessions to meetings and they do not report back to Session.
5. There was an expressed lack of trust for giving money to mission when "the Presbytery doesn't tell us where our money goes."
6. Few churches are using the "Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study" regularly.
7. Some churches see being "self-sufficient" as more important than being a part of the body of Christ.
8. Hope that Presbytery is making every effort to keep costs down for the local churches.
9. A wish that the Presbytery would have "a face" in the local congregations on a regular basis. "Walls have been built up. They are coming down with meetings like this. This has been great."
10. Need more concentration on Youth involvement.
11. Several churches expressed concern over General Assembly actions. Felt the General Assembly did not represent their congregations' thinking on issues. "How do we feel about GA? Do you have another night? What are they smoking?"
12. "We are the Presbytery and we are the General Assembly. We may not like the decisions that are being made, but they are being made by pastors and elders. If we have a bone to pick, it is with our pastors and elders."
13. Several churches expressed concern over the future of the denomination.
14. "We need to be in prayer for the 2006 General Assembly."

2. TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force was composed of the following individuals:

Elder Phyllis Neral- Level Green Presbyterian Church, Trafford, Chair
Elder Susan Blank- Congruity Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria
The Rev. Keith Conover- Pleasant View Presbyterian Church, Smock
The Rev. James Farrer- Ebensburg Presbyterian Church, Ebensburg
The Rev. Mark Juengel-Connellsville Presbyterian Church, Connellsville
Elder Cheryl Rhea- First Presbyterian Church, Jeannette
Elder William Rogers-First Presbyterian Church, Murrysville
Elder Sarabeth Stopansky-Congruity Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria

We also thank the following people for helping with the Listening Sessions:

The Rev. Roland Catterall-Retired, Johnstown
Mrs. Lee Ann Conover- Pleasant View Presbyterian Church, Smock
The Rev. Norma Prina-Murphy-former Interim, United Presbyterian Church, New Kensington
Elder Leah Williams, First Presbyterian Church, Johnstown

And, we thank the following people for helping us by reviewing our report:

The Rev. Marnie Silbert, Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church, Murrysville
The Rev. Michael Orsted, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Uniontown

Resourced the committee:

The Rev. Dr. Douglas Holben, Executive Presbyter
Elder Mary Ellen Lawson, Stated Clerk- Westminster Presbyterian, Greensburg
The Rev. Dr. Douglas Stevens, Consultant for Congregational Services

3. PARTICIPATING CHURCHES AND OTHER GROUPS

CHURCHES FULLY PARTICIPATING

Adah, Palmer Community	5 and Moderator
Apollo, Pine Run	8 and Pastor
Apollo, Poke Run	4 and Pastor
Ardara	20* and Pastor
Avonmore	14 and Interim Pastor
Belle Vernon, First	2 and Interim Pastor
Belle Vernon, Harmony	8 and Moderator
Belle Vernon, Marion	5 and CLP
Belle Vernon, Rehoboth	10 and Pastor
Bolivar, Fort Palmer	7 and CLP
Bolivar, United	7 and CLP
Brownsville, Calvin	3 and Stated Supply
Brownsville, Ft. Burd	15 and Pastor
Colver	8 and Pastor
Connellsville	14 and Pastor
Derry	11 and Interim Pastor
Dunbar, First	5 and Moderator
Dunbar, Laurel Hill	10 and CLP
Ebensburg	7 and Pastor
Fayette City, First	6 and Stated Supply
Greensburg, Westminster	12 and Pastor
Irwin, Covenant	8 and Interim Pastor

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON MISSION STRATEGY

Irwin, First	6 and Interim Pastor
Irwin, West Hempfield	18* and Pastor
Jeannette, First	12 and Interim Pastor
Johnstown, First	12 and Pastor
Johnstown, Westmont	14 and Interim Pastor
Leisenring	3 and CLP
Ligonier, Covenant	13 and Pastor
Lower Burrell, Grace	19 and Pastor
Lower Burrell, Puckety	4 and Pastor
Masontown	7 and Stated Supply
McClellandtown	9 and Moderator
Mt. Pleasant, Reunion	7 and Stated Supply
Murrysville, First	7 and Pastor
Murrysville, Newlonsburg	4 and Pastor and Associate Pastor
Murrysville, Union	25* and Pastor
New Alexandria, Community	12* and Pastor
New Alexandria, Congruity	19 and Pastor
New Florence, Bethel	7 and CLP
New Kensington, United	10* and Interim Pastor
New Salem	7 and Pastor
North Huntingdon, Christ United	8 and Pastor
Revloc	5 and Pastor
Scottdale, Calvin	15 and Pastor
Smithfield, Grace Chapel	5 and Moderator
Smock, Pleasant View	16 and Pastor
Somerset, St. Paul's	12 and Pastor
Trafford, Level Green	100* and Pastor
Uniontown, Tent	2 and Moderator
Uniontown, Third	28 and Temporary Supply
Uniontown, Trinity	12 and Pastor
Vanderbilt, East Liberty	11 and CLP and wife
Vandergrift	24 and Pastor
West Newton, United	12* and Pastor
Youngwood	3

Redstone Highlands (North Huntingdon) 27 and Intern

*Not recorded in minutes—best recollection

CHURCHES WHOSE PASTORS PARTICIPATED IN THE PASTORS' LISTENING SESSIONS

Boswell, Covenant
 Cresson (wanted to participate-scheduling difficulties)
 Dawson, Tyrone
 Delmont
 Fairchance

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON MISSION STRATEGY

Farmington, Mt. Washington
Greensburg, Maplewood
Lake Lynn, Springhill Furnace
Manor
New Florence, Trinity
Patton
Seward/Armagh
Slickville
Suttersville
West Leisening (wanted to participate-scheduling difficulties)
West Newton Sewickley United (wanted to participate, scheduling difficulties)
Windber, First (wanted to participate-scheduling difficulties)