

Answering the Call

Mission Council Report to Session

The Mission Council was formed in response to a recommendation that came out of the work of the Envisioning Task Force. Its charter was to examine the mission work of Westminster and deliberate on its future as part of our church's commitment to *Worship Well*.

Building upon the passages in the Envisioning Task Force Report citing *The Book of Order* – including “The Great Ends of the Church” and “The Meaning of Membership” – as well as upon passages from *Christian Humanism*, we look to scripture for guidance as we answer the call.

What is our calling? Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Why is mission important? James 2:2

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

What matters most? Matthew 22:38

Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

How will we serve? Matthew 25:33-46

Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ‘For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?’ ‘And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?’ ‘When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’

“The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’

Why Westminster? Luke 12:48

For everyone to whom much is given, of him shall much be required.

As long as human need exists, as long as human sin is apparent, and as long as people have not yet been exposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, there are infinite ways in which our church and its members can grow in mission.

The Mission Council believes that our church's mission work has made important and valuable contributions in our community, nation, and world.

We believe that our mission work has benefited from the time, talent, and resources of our Congregation.

We believe that as the demographic profile of our Congregation evolves, so too should our approach to mission.

We believe that Westminster has much to be thankful for as we have been blessed as a Congregation.

And, having completed and paid for the renovation of our facilities, we believe that the church is being called to further expand its mission involvement in our community, nation and world, both in terms of its monetary commitment as well as the hands-on volunteer efforts of its members.

Can we do more? YES. There is no shortage of needs. Should we do more? YES. We believe that Westminster has the capacity, the resources, and the call of Christ to do so.

What is needed is the commitment and leadership to challenge ourselves as a Congregation to answer God's call to love our neighbor as ourselves, and in doing so love God with all our heart, soul, and mind.

The Holy Spirit is contagious, the *Good News* waiting to be shared, oppression and injustices to be confronted, and basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter to be met. Our faith directs us toward action. The challenge for us as a Congregation is to ***Answer the Call.***

Mission Council's Answers to Strategic Questions

Much of the Mission Council's deliberations over the past year are reflected in the following series of strategic questions that were put before the officers at their retreat in April 2010. A written synopsis of the brainstorming for each question that resulted from the retreat is available in the appendix to this report. Below are the Mission Council's summaries of the answers.

Where do we want mission to be in five years? Ten years? What is our vision?

We want Mission at Westminster to ...

- ...be guided by the Holy Spirit and to bear witness to our faith.
- ...become an integral part of "worshipping well."
- ...challenge us as a Congregation to sacrifice, serve others, and grow closer to God.
- ...be well communicated and widely understood among the Congregation.
- ...be visible, measurable and accountable.

How do we measure success in mission? How do we set goals? How do we measure those goals? How do we know 10 years from now that we have achieved what we set out to achieve?

Goals are only achieved if they are measured. That which is measured can then be communicated. Whatever can be communicated is understood. That which is understood is usually supported. We recognize goal setting in a mission context is not easy. Nor is any one metric or even series of metrics likely to completely or accurately capture the compassion Westminster as a Congregation strives to demonstrate. However, we do believe that mission planning going forward at Westminster should include more emphasis on goal-setting and measurement.

Are we offering a diverse set of opportunities for mission that meets the needs of those in the Congregation looking to engage in mission and service?

Probably not, but more is already being done to meet the needs of the many younger adults who have recently joined the church. More should be done. We should be continually looking for new ways to involve members.

How is mission funded? Are we giving enough? Should there be a balance between on-budget and off-budget giving?

Westminster should continue to fund its mission both on-budget and off-budget. Currently the mix between the two is nearly evenly divided, but as a Mission Council we believe the on-budget funding towards mission is reflective of the contribution the Congregation as a whole has collectively designated for mission.

We believe that we have the capacity to give more. Rather than identifying an "ideal mix," instead we believe that the Session should take seriously the commitment that is made collectively as a Congregation to mission and make it a priority in the annual budget process of the church.

How evangelical do we want our mission work to be? Is it evangelical enough?

Evangelism takes many forms and we witness to Jesus in all of our mission work. Currently, our most direct form of evangelism takes place through our financial support of Good News Jail Ministries, funding of Presbytery mission church development and through our support for various ministries in Africa. We should remain open to exploring more ways to share the good news in all of our mission work.

What risks do we take with our mission work? What kinds of mission work should we be doing that stretches our comfort zone?

We take limited risks in our current work and should be open to taking on more. After all, Jesus rarely played it safe and routinely associated himself with the outcasts of his day, upsetting the establishment, and was willing to put himself and his convictions on the line. Further, we also recognize that in many instances risk can be mitigated with education and training.

Mission work and advocacy can be closely related. What, as a Congregation, is our calling in terms of being advocates for certain causes?

According to the Book of Order, one of the six great ends of the church is “The Promotion of Social Righteousness.” We should not only address immediate humanitarian needs through our financial generosity, we must also address the underlying causes of injustice.

The Mission Council endorses Westminster’s culture and ethic which provides opportunity and encouragement for individuals to be involved in organizations, social and political causes, and vocations that impact society based on their own consciences and beliefs. We appreciate Westminster’s approach of welcoming people from a variety of political and social viewpoints. While Westminster should not become involved in partisan advocacy, we should seek out ways to become involved in issues of justice in our own community, nationally and around the world, praying for God’s guidance, and listening for God’s voice through scripture, meditation, and conversations such as those that occur in Adult education classes on issue topics.

Recommendations

Financial Priorities & Projections

Below are the financial recommendations and accompanying rationale to grow the mission budget over the next five years through new programs and opportunities for Congregational involvement. A chart on page 9 shows funding requirements and a proposed timetable for making those investments over the next five years.

National/International Mission - New Funding Priorities

Moi's Bridge Capital Improvements

The orphanage operating expenses are almost entirely funded off-budget as it has been easier to seek specific pledges, largely through the alternative giving bazaar, to sponsor the costs of covering an orphan for a year. However, the funding of needed capital improvements at the orphanage remains a challenge. There are more than \$100,000 of capital improvements that will be required in the next five years, and more needs are likely to emerge. The Mission Council recommends that Westminster commit to addressing these capital projects, which are outlined in the chart at the end of this section.

United Orphanage and Academy at Moi's Bridge Awareness Program

The Mission Council recommends the development of a set of materials that would be used to better market Moi's Bridge to increase the level of understanding within our own Congregation as to the extensive and long-term nature of the commitment we have made to the orphanage. In addition, such materials could be used to potentially recruit additional churches and individuals in support of Moi's Bridge. The amount requested could also cover potential expenses for Westminster representatives to travel in support of Moi's Bridge.

Currently the steering committee is comprised of representatives from four churches, although the overwhelming majority of financial support for the orphanage comes from Westminster. While we recommend that Westminster increase its financial support to the orphanage, it is important over the long-term that Moi's Bridge is supported by a broader and deeper network of churches. Moi's Bridge currently operates without any financial cushion for unexpected events. In addition, there are no funds to pay for education beyond the academy. Therefore, as good stewards of the orphanage that we were instrumental in establishing, it would be prudent, if possible, to recruit additional church support.

National Project

Despite our prior involvement with the Spirit Lake Indian reservation, it is clear for a variety of reasons that we are not prepared at this time to make a further commitment there. Therefore, the National/International Mission Committee will identify a new project of emphasis in 2011 which will need financial support starting in 2012. The \$20,000 projection is based on what would likely have been our commitment to Spirit Lake had we chosen to further develop our relationship with that community.

Expansion of Short-Term Mission Trips

Mission Council supports National/International Mission committee plans to expand on the planned Appalachian Service Project (ASP) trip scheduled for this fall. In the next five years, Westminster should

identify three long weekend mission trips annually that could be done within driving distance from Alexandria. These trips allow for intergenerational participants, with an emphasis on young adults and busy professionals who wish to participate in a mission trip, but cannot dedicate a full week of vacation to that endeavor. ASP or a similar organization might also serve as the springboard for a national project of emphasis for Westminster.

Local Mission – New Funding Priorities

Senior Service of Alexandria: Underwrite New Resource Center

Founded in 1968, Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) is the only nonprofit organization in Alexandria dedicated to advocating for and serving seniors. With a mission to “foster independence and self-sufficiency, enabling seniors within the City of Alexandria to age with dignity,” SSA implements the popular Meals on Wheels program, as well as other services. Westminster has a long-standing relationship with SSA.

Seniors, as a share of total population in Alexandria, grew from 9% in 2000 to 11% in 2006. It is projected that the elder population will be 115% larger in 2030 than it was in 2000. More seniors are living at home. Arguably, the most pronounced service gap in Alexandria is among seniors. Many people need help and don’t know how to get it. SSA envisions creating a Resource Center to expand on their existing services and relationships. The Center will provide basic services to seniors, their families, and their caregivers including:

1. Referrals to and assistance navigating social welfare, counseling and other services;
2. A directory of professionals, charities and businesses that provide a broad range of services;
3. An annual symposium gathering experts on trends and entities providing resources for seniors.

This new Senior Resources Center would offer an increased opportunity for WPC members to volunteer in a hands-on way by working in, with, and through the center. Examples include helping with bill-paying, forms, etc.; navigating Medicare and other services; providing transportation; organizing the volunteer corps and resource directory. Many of our members also would benefit from this “clearinghouse” of services.

SSA projects a need of \$75,000 per year for “Phase 1” of this project. That involves expanding current staff to include a full-time social worker; developing sufficient volunteers to maintain a directory of service providers; and marketing and outreach. SSA is pursuing a broad donor base and also has grant requests pending. In fact, they would prefer to receive funding from multiple sources than to rely too heavily on a limited number of donors. They are asking for a minimum three-year commitment. Mission Council recommends that Westminster make a five-year escalating commitment starting at \$20,000 and increasing over time to \$40,000.

Carpenter’s Shelter: Underwrite Education Coordinator Position

Founded 20 years ago in an Alexandria church basement, Carpenter’s Shelter has grown to be the largest shelter for single adults and families with children in Northern Virginia. With a mission of ending homelessness one person at a time, Carpenter’s focuses on equipping its residents and the chronically

homeless who drop in to its emergency day shelter, David's Place, with the life skills necessary to break the cycle of homelessness. Because education is the key to this, two years ago Carpenter's added a staff position, Education Coordinator, thanks to a one-time grant. The education coordinator ensures that the community partnerships and on-site programs are on track, and serves as mentor to those involved in education programs. Due to these programs and the support from Carpenter's Staff, 93% of those individuals who graduate from Carpenter's residency and participate in the After Care program remain self-sufficient more than one year after leaving the shelter.

Because the one-time grant funding this position is nearing the end of its term, the position is at risk of being discontinued. Carpenter's is looking for an organization to help underwrite the salary for this position going forward. Westminster already has a strong relationship and history with Carpenter's Shelter. However, the expansion of the education program will offer even more opportunities for members to become involved by teaching courses, mentoring, etc. Mission Council recommends Westminster make a five-year escalating commitment starting at \$20,000 and increasing over time to \$40,000.

Child Care for WPC Local Mission Activities

In recent years, Westminster has experienced a significant growth in the number of families with young children who have joined the church. It is important that we find ways to help them engage in the mission work we perform. One of the barriers to participation is child care. It's difficult for a young family to pay \$10 an hour or more for child care simply so they can volunteer a few hours of their time.

We have paid professionals who provide child care during services. With the appropriate budget, we could extend this service to support some of our monthly volunteer activities. The Mission Council recommends that we gradually phase in this service, budgeting limited hours in year one and increasing those hours incrementally.

Other Financial Recommendations

Projections for Existing Mission On-Budget Programs

Mission Council believes that a 4% escalator should be budgeted for growth in support of our existing financial commitments for local, national, and international mission each year for the next five years. Many of the programs we support require our funds just to keep the doors open and our current level of support to those organizations should be maintained.

Mission Coordinator

The Mission Council believes that as the mission life and programs grow at Westminster so will the need for greater support from staff. It is a blessing to have a mission coordinator funded at 20 hours a week, but Mission Council believes that eventually this position could be expanded to full-time. Mission Council financial projections provided in the chart below are largely placeholder numbers given that Mission Council didn't explore what the actual salary and benefit costs for an expanded position would total.

Presbytery Mission Contribution

The Mission Council proposes to increase our contribution to the National Capital Presbytery's Mission work by \$7,000 in 2011 and have it grow by 4% annually thereafter, which will bring us in line with the average contribution per member of churches in the presbytery. The Mission Council is impressed with the Presbytery's focus on planting new churches throughout the metro area, especially churches that serve immigrant communities. Further, given that evangelism is part of our responsibility to *Answer the Call*, and that the other programs we support financially primarily serve human need, Westminster's contribution to the Presbytery's mission budget becomes more meaningful. The Mission Council believes that Westminster is enriched through this connected mission ministry and believes it is important to better educate our members on the joint work we do.

MISSION COUNCIL REQUEST

<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
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Local Mission

New Programs

Childcare

\$ 1,200	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,600	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800
\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 40,000
\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 40,000

Senior Services Center - Resource Center

Carpenter's Shelter - Education Position

National Mission

New Programs

Appalachian

\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000

National Mission Program

International Mission

New Programs/Capital Expenditures

Moi's Bridge Awareness Program

\$ 7,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
\$22,000				
	\$ 5,000			
	\$20,000			
			\$10,000	
		\$ 25,000		
			\$ 10,000	
			\$ 1,000	
				\$ 8,000
				\$ 4,000

Complete the 3rd floor of academy building

Ten flush toilet facilities

Purchase a bus

Hostel for returning students and visitors

Vocational training facility

Irrigation system for fields

Rain cisterns

4-wheel drive

Solar panels

Total - New Programs

\$ 73,700	\$ 105,400	\$ 119,600	\$ 126,800	\$ 127,800
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Mission On-Budget (2010 Budget)

Local - 4% Growth of Existing Programs

National/International - 4% Growth of Existing Programs

2010 Budget

\$ 65,551	\$ 68,173	\$ 70,900	\$ 73,736	\$ 76,685	\$ 79,753
\$ 69,045	\$ 71,807	\$ 74,679	\$ 77,666	\$ 80,773	\$ 84,004

Total - Existing Programs

\$ 139,980	\$ 145,579	\$ 151,402	\$ 157,458	\$ 163,757
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Total - Expenditures

\$213,680	\$250,979	\$271,002	\$284,258	\$291,557
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Misc. Items.

Presb. Assessment Mission

Expanded Role Mission Coordinator

\$ 16,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,920	\$ 24,877	\$ 25,872	\$ 26,907
	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000

Notes: Roughly 50% of Mission funding for programs is off-budget and is a result of designated giving which is not captured in this budget projection. This budget projection does not address the new member and Reform Institute expenditures which appear as an on-budget mission expenditures. However, Mission Council does suggest increased budget support for the Mission Coordinator position and our presbytery assessment designated for mission above, which both impact mission, but fall in other budget categories within the church budget structure.

Non-Financial Recommendations

Local Missions:

- Westminster should continue its involvement in the local mission programs that we currently support, and the local mission committee should continue its annual review process that's used to evaluate existing programs and consider additional programs.
- The Local Missions Committee should continue its diligence in providing a variety of opportunities for Westminster member to give their time in ways that match their availability, frequency of service, and gifts.
- The Local Missions Committee should continue to provide liaisons to each organization that Westminster supports financially in order to monitor the role that our contributions play in the organization's overall operation.
- The Mission Council endorses the Local Mission Committee increased communication efforts and in particular supports the continuation of the CHESS moniker—Children, Hunger, Education, Shelter, Self-sufficiency—which should continue to serve as both a strategic focus and communication tool of Westminster's local mission work.
- Local Mission Committee should develop a series of goals for its programs in 2011. Those goals should be communicated to Session and the Congregation and tracked in 2011.

National/International Missions:

- The United Orphanage and Academy at Moi's Bridge, which was founded in 2000, should be further incorporated into the life of the church. Under the direction of the National/International Mission Committee, a Steering Committee consisting of members of several local congregations in addition to Westminster, will continue the efforts of Henri Rush, as the orphanage and academy plan for the next decade.
- The Mission Council believes that the Congregation is not fully aware of the long-term investment and commitment that we have made to Moi's Bridge and how literally the lives of 50 orphans and hundreds of schoolchildren are directly dependent on Westminster. As part of the effort to recruit new churches to support Moi's Bridge, the National/International Committee should develop a communication plan for 2011 to raise the awareness of the size, scope, depth and long-term nature of this commitment.

- National/International Mission Committee should develop a series of goals for its programs in 2011. Those goals should be communicated to Session and the Congregation and tracked in 2011. The goals which are developed should identify a national program of emphasis for Westminster beginning in 2012.

Organization, Communication, Structure & Other:

- Mission Council recommends that the National/International Mission Committee be split into two committees, one that would focus on Moi's Bridge and other Africa projects as well as any other international mission work that may arise, while another would be formed in order to increase the church's focus on national mission. The National Mission Committee should also follow and monitor our connections and activities with the National Capital Presbytery and the larger church, communicate such activities to the Session and Congregation, arrange commissioners to attend Presbytery meetings, and nurture involvement of Westminster members and ministers on presbytery committees and committees of the larger church. This restructuring of the Mission committees may require an increase in the size of the Session.
- Westminster needs an annual report on mission, in order to increase the transparency and accountability, as well as to better communicate and inform the Congregation as to the work that is being done. Such a report should provide a comprehensive assessment of what has been accomplished, what is needed going forward, and what is planned. It should also include the goals established by the various committees as well as a financial overview. This report would be coordinated by the Mission Council.
- For the mission at Westminster to be truly successful it must be embraced and supported by the clergy, the staff and the officers. To that end, we suggest that the Session commit to tracking and following mission activities to ensure that we are fulfilling our commitment to elevate mission in our Congregation.
- The Session should consider the possibility of surveying the Congregation to better understand what mission means to them, what charities they are involved in outside of Westminster, and what volunteer opportunities should be offered.
- Sunday bulletins should begin to regularly include a prayer for a mission related program that Westminster sponsors, is involved with or active in.
- Westminster should develop a chart that easily lays out the volunteer opportunities we provide the Congregation based on available time commitments members may have to give. That chart should be updated and printed in the bulletin as an insert quarterly.
- Mission Council supports the efforts of Westminster to integrate mission, fellowship, education, and worship into church programming where possible and in the awareness and consciousness of the Congregation. Mission Council recommends that the committees governing fellowship,

education, and worship add a component (not cited by the Mission Council in this report) to their activities in 2011 that incorporates mission.

- The Church HOME Committee should refine the time and talent process so that we can collect more information about members' specific vocational and avocational skills and specializations. With this helpful information, we could potentially match up our Congregation's skills with the needs that arise within the organizations we support in mission, which would create better volunteer opportunities.
- The Session should establish an unrestricted Mission Fund. Such a fund would be a vehicle for members of the Congregation to make contributions on various occasions, to honor and remember special events and loved ones, or to include in one's estate. In addition, in years when unexpected revenue is generated, the Session could make contributions.
- With regard to advocacy, the Session needs to always be open to discerning whether the Holy Spirit is leading us, in any particularly time or on any particular issue, to advocate for a particular position, especially on local issues that affect the poor and disadvantaged. The process for considering a proposal that would involve advocacy would be through the normal committee process where appropriate, or through a special process set up by the moderator for that purpose where appropriate.
- As quickly as possible, the Session should complete improvements to the lobby that communicate who we are, particularly with regard to mission, which (unlike worship, education, and fellowship) is not immediately apparent upon entering the building.
- The church should adopt, as its norm for determining percent of expenditures devoted to mission, the figures on the Annual Statistical Report approved by the Session each January and currently available on-line for the past ten years. That figure should appear as a notation in the January Session Minutes each year when the Annual Report is approved. Whenever a percentage of mission spending as a share of expenditures is used, officially, in the communications of the church, it should be that figure that appears in the January Minutes derived from the Annual Statistical Report.
- Further, in reporting overall mission giving, the Annual Statistical Report should identify or approximate what percentage of stewardship pledges supports mission.
- As Stewardship Committees conduct stewardship campaigns, if they construct a campaign that is based on an anticipated or targeted operating budget, they need to be aware of the difference between a percentage of a person's pledge that would support mission within an operating budget versus the percentage of expenditures appearing in the January minutes for the prior year. The two figures can differ significantly; and for a stewardship campaign, a percentage is a target, while in the Annual Statistical Report it is an actuality of the prior year.
- Currently 12% of stewardship pledges go to support mission related expenditure. The Mission Council believes that the Session should carefully track our collective giving as a Congregation to

mission and not allow support for mission from stewardship pledges to fall below this amount. The Mission Council believes range of 12% to 18% of stewardship pledges supporting mission is ideal.

Future of Mission Council

Mission Council recommends that it continue to be a part of the governance of mission work at Westminster. In addition to the chair and vice-chair of each of the mission committees, two or three additional members could be added. It should meet as needed to:

- Continue to develop, enhance and communicate the long-term strategic vision for mission;
- Integrate mission into worship, fellowship, and education as part of Westminster's aim to "Worship Well;"
- Reach out to other Congregations to share and learn from each other's experiences with mission;
- Provide oversight and administration of the recommended unrestricted Mission Fund;
- Coordinate the recommended annual report on mission at Westminster.

This report has been written and approved by the Mission Council:

Members:

Melynda Wilcox, Co-Chair

Sean Heather, Co-Chair

Doug Anderson

Linc Cummings

Pricilla Goodwin

Rita Grazda

Erik Johnson

David Roden

Steve Sieke

Eric Weiss

Staff Liaisons:

Larry Hayward

Janet Riksen

The Mission Council would also like to acknowledge and thank David Moser for his leadership while he served as the initial chair during the Council's early work.

ANNEX: Westminster Presbyterian Officer Intreat 2010
Small Group Breakout Summaries

Question # 1

Where do we want mission to be in 5yrs? 10yrs? Where is/What is our vision?

There was an 8-9 year vision that drove the renovation, should we develop a similar grand plan for Westminster's work in the world?

Long Range Strategic Mission to help identify, commit and achieve constant improvement.

Considerations

- We can always do better
- Desire to make more opportunities more accessible for
- Young families with little vacation time or something they can do together as a family as a teaching time for the kids
- People who are not able to do physical labor but want to do something substantive and hands-on and real participation (in addition to monetary contributions)
- We now have many more young families - vision centering on young families bringing them along and helping them teach their children
- Mission spending. Worried about flexibility of off-budget giving. How can we maintain our mission goals if off-budget goes down?
- What about an off-budget special offering for mission but not targeted? Would not be targeted, e.g., a One Great Hour for Mission. A flexible pot of money for Mission Council or mission committees to allocate.
- Should we a lot of different kind of mission or focus on a few?
- Local Mission has really pruned its projects and doesn't feel they are spread too thin.
- Want to always have a quality impact in whatever we do.
- Harder for a local mission project to be Aowned@ or Aclaimed@ as a signature program because they are so big - like Habitat for Humanity or Meals on Wheels - because others are also participating and the cost would be huge done alone.
- If you have a targeted (signature) mission, would it encourage more new people in mission or would it take away...would probably be a benefit.
- We could partner with another church in a more urban setting for a signature program.
- Look about location; what does our location say about who we may/should serve?
- Know of other churches in an affluent area that partnered with urban churches and had great exchanges on many levels.
- One idea in the past at Westminster when Karen Blomberg was with us was starting a pastoral counseling center such as Stephens Ministry.
- One of our objectives should be increasing proportion of members involved in mission.
- Don't see a whole lot of room in budget for increasing mission.
- Mission foundation campaign similar to building campaign for \$1 million.
- Once created a foundation for mission, and properly invest it, it will grow.

- Mission brochure needs to be better distributed - remind people where to find.
- We are doing better in communication than we were 10 years ago, but need to further improve.
- If people want to find out about mission they can easily

Question #2

How do we measure success in mission? How do we set goals? How do we measure those goals? How do we know 10 years from now that we have achieved what we set out to achieve?

RESPONSES:

This breakout group examined the above issues from the perspective measuring success from the perspective of scope, as opposed to the perspective of evaluation. Because of this focus, the discussion primarily centered on concepts of engagement, as opposed to outcomes, in evaluating WPC mission success. Within that framework, the following points were reviewed that should help inform the work of the Mission Council

- A. Two broad categories of measuring success were noted as quantitative and qualitative. The majority of discussion focused on the quantitative, specifically around issues of Congregation engagement in mission activities.
- B. It was the consensus of this group that WPC needs to routinely gather and report out data that summarizes mission activity on the following dimensions:
 - a. Involvement by Program: A complete listing of mission activity engaged by WPC, listing focus and activities of the mission. This could be an annual report to the Congregation.
 - b. Involvement by Member: A listing of the numbers and hours of member participation in mission activity. This could also include listing (with permission) each individual engaged in each mission activity, which could serve as a mechanism to encourage other WPC members to become involved in a given mission activity.
 - c. Impact of mission: This would be a report to the Congregation that outlines how the involvement of WPC makes a difference in the world. It would conceivably be a component of the mission report suggested in (a) above.
- C. The group consensus was that there needs to be more communication of how all aspects of WPC worship (education, fellowship, and worship) contribute to the mission activities of the church. Examples included the preparation of trail mix baggies in church school that is used as part of the Bag Lunch program. The group believed that there needs to be a greater emphasis on the connectivity of church activities and our mission programs.
- D. The group consensus was that there needs to be an increased emphasis on engaging the Congregation in mission opportunities. Suggestions in this area included:
 - a. Re-establishing the "Time and Talent" survey that previously was included with pledge materials.
 - b. Creating a Mission Pledge Goal similar to the Stewardship Pledge Goal that establishes both personal and Congregational commitments to mission activity.

- c. Tracking mission involvement numbers of mission activities, numbers of individuals involved, and numbers of hours engaged in mission. The group believed that “more is better”, and felt that these numbers should be captured and reporting. The final thought was that budgets and/or goals for these metrics should be established to provide inspiration for WPC mission involvement.
 - d. The creation of a pew rack card for Mission Impact, which would become a listing in the bulletin similar to the current Joys and Concerns listings. This card could serve several purposes: providing a vehicle for members to express a desire to become engaged in a specific mission; provide a method to acknowledge the impact of mission on an individual member of the Congregation; and provide ongoing communication (shared thankfulness) of the impact that WPC mission activity has in the community and in the world.
- E. There was also consensus that mission activity needs to be evaluated in qualitative terms. The group thought that evaluations should focus on the quality of the mission for both the participants in mission activity and recipients of our mission efforts. It was noted that “success” in mission is often the perception of the mission by these two groups, and that metrics alone (i.e., number of bag lunches served) cannot adequately capture the impact of mission activity. To accomplish this, it was the suggestion of the group that each mission be evaluated with a feedback report that captures this information. With discrete mission activity, such as an annual mission trip, it would be appropriate to create these reports at the end of the mission activity. Other mission activities are ongoing, such as Bag Lunch, Last Saturday food distribution, Carpenters Shelter, and tutoring. These programs should be reviewed for qualitative reports on an annual basis. The information from these reports should be routinely presented to the appropriate mission committees (Local, NIMC) as a resource for their planning and budgeting.
- F. The final point of this group discussion was a re-emphasized concern for increased communication of mission activity at WPC, including its opportunities for service, its dimensions of engagement in the community and the world, and the interconnectedness of mission with all aspects of worship. The group noted and identified areas where this currently occurs (Minute for Mission, Mission Brunch, and bulletin/Chronicle notes). The group believed that these are helpful, but that the suggestions noted above could help to increase an overall comprehension of both the importance of mission, and increased involvement in mission activity at WPC.

Question #3

Are we offering a diverse set of opportunities for mission that meets the needs of those in the Congregation looking to engage in mission and service? How are we doing this by age group? Youth? Seniors?

Who are the groups we are trying to reach?

- Families who want to volunteer as a unit (e.g. tiny kids, older kids, etc.)
- Those with limited time
- Those with limited resources (e.g. \$\$\$, mobility, creativity, etc.)
- WPC Committees and Groups (e.g. Youth Group, Circles, Choir, etc.)
- Seniors—both working and retired

- Singles
- DINKS (double income, no kids)
- Visitors!!!
- Neighbors of the church
- Young adults (as in the demographic—not just the members of the Young Adults Group)
- New members
- People who participate in Adult Ed classes

Should we be equipping young families with tools to help reinforce the values of giving with their children?

- Cultivate awareness with things like Pennies for Mission
- Linking the Children’s sermon to special offerings (e.g. why do we participate in one great hour? Perhaps teaching about it in Creation Station ahead of time so children can participate in the offerings; explain the envelopes!)

Teach why both active giving and financial giving is important to counter the “why can’t we just write a check?” and the “why do I have to tithe...I volunteer!” arguments.

- Identify more hands on opportunities
- Communicate tough messages about poverty and the needy

Have Creation Station classes and Youth Groups adopt a specific charity that they can support all year

New Members: recognize that some want to dive in and others drag in; don’t over force the issue...enable instead.

Identify sizeable opportunities (e.g. if you have an hour, a week, a day, a weekend, four hours. Etc.); create an opportunity grid.

Form partnerships with committees (e.g. MRT, deacons, etc.) Ask them to do something connected to mission

Think of things that are doable for those who work full time

Look at linking current WPC programs to mission (e.g. benefit concerts; invite children from Carpenter’s Shelter to Creation Station, etc.)

Think of ways for shut-ins to participate; can they write letters, help with maintaining lists, address envelopes, knit baby blankets, etc. Everyone wants to feel needed and helping others can be restorative for those who feel alone.

Question #4

How is mission funded? Are we giving enough? Should there be a balance between undesignated and designated (on-budget vs. off-budget) giving? Is it a problem or do we care if funding becomes one sided?

- Need to better understand on-budget/off-budget distinction – prefer designated/undesignated
- Questions about how the budget is set.
 - Does budget funding for mission get reduced if we get more designated given than expected?
 - Are designated funds “budgeted”? Do we know or have a target for what we expect to receive from designated giving?
 - Are we assuming the total pie or the percent for mission in the budget is fixed or limited?
 - Can we increase giving?
 - Can we establish a reserved fund or endowment for mission that earns interest we can spend?
 - Youth sometimes work on a two year mission funding cycle, but the rest of the church is on an annual spending plan
 - Pay as you go vs. targeted annual giving
- Need to define what we want to do in mission
 - Set goals and seek funding by making a compelling case for the project/proposal
 - Why is it important?
 - Stewardship might increase if we make a pledge to mission
 - 12.5% → 15% might encourage more giving
 - More clarity about where the money goes would help
 - People are more likely to give to a special compelling need
 - Is it practical to do it in any other way?
 - Mission is different from other budget items
- Stewardship is not clear about where the money goes.
 - Higher potential for designated giving, but don’t give people designated choices in the stewardship campaign
 - Set overall goals for general giving
 - Could say that anything we receive in pledges above a specific budget goal will go to mission.
- Signature local mission project would be helpful
 - Better funding and involvement opportunities
 - Doesn’t have to be something new, but we need to know the organization is depending on us – fundamental support
 - Direct giving to people vs. administrative cost percent split should be identified
- Set designated goal for funding – clear goal – less random
 - Too many designated requests are a problem
 - Set target and keep track of how we are doing
 - Thermometer of reaching our total – total and individual designated targets
 - Better for planning of funds available and needs
- Are we giving enough?
 - Flip is around – Are we capable of doing more?

- Do we need to give more?
 - Don't compare to other churches
 - How much is good? What is the goal?
 - Set the goal for mission – 20% of total giving
 - Establish a program to raise the goal each year to say 25%
- Set a benchmark as a minimum budget percentage – there is value in having a specific number.
 - People prefer to give to organizations that make higher commitments to mission
 - Reflects the churches commitment to mission
 - Report the percent of mission giving that goes to pay administrative expenses (staff) vs. the percent that goes directly to people.
- We need both designated and undesignated
 - Only one approach won't work

Question #5

How evangelical do we want our mission work to be? Is it evangelical enough?

- *The Bible instructs us to share the good news*
- *Secular nonprofits can feed, clothe, shelter—what makes us different?*
- *Being a witness to the good news can take many forms, both subtle and direct*
- *How do we and should we bear witness in our mission work (e.g. should we offer grace at bag lunch?)*

Bottom-line conclusion: We have a wide variety of members with different comfort levels regarding evangelism. Some see evangelism as a testimony to why we are involved in mission in the first place. Others prefer a more subtle approach and simply leading by example with their good deeds.

Things we should do:

- Identify ourselves as being from WPC by wearing t-shirts or special aprons; this gives recipients an easy opportunity to ask us about our faith and our church
- Know the audience that we are helping—i.e. is it multi-faith, such as the bag lunch recipients, or is it known to be Christian, such as a family whose home is being repaired through Rebuilding Together?
- Ask leaders of organizations that we're involved with what degree of evangelism would be appropriate, and ask those we're helping for permission before offering to pray with them
- Refrain from sending the message that our *only* objective for doing the mission work is to convert hearts and minds to Christ
- Continue to encourage our youth to invite friends to youth events even if their parents do not attend WPC

Things we could consider adding or doing differently to enhance the evangelism component of our mission work:

- Incorporate prayer into the bag lunch program
 - add a card inside the bag or a sticker on the outside of the bag that offers a simple grace (a spoken "group" grace would be difficult logistically because people are coming and going and not all would want to participate)
 - include a postcard with WPC name and address
 - print material should have a "feel-good" message and not look like an advertisement
- Make more printed material available to recipients who might want to learn more about WPC
- Send transportation van to Carpenter's Shelter or Arlandria for Sunday services
- Provide financial and technical assistance to National Capital Presbytery's new church development projects
 - Make members of the pastoral staff available to be guest preachers for fledgling congregations
- Mass mailings to the neighborhood advertising services

Question #6

What risks (non-financial) do we take with our mission work? What kinds of mission work should we be doing that stretches our comfort zones?

--e.g. in the 1980s service to HIV positive community when others were afraid; acceptance and adoption of the homeless on the streets in front of 5th Ave Presbyterian Church in NYC

--Jesus certainly didn't play it safe

The small group discussed the fact the church and the office do not deal with walk-ins. No money, no vouchers, nothing do to the risk. It was also recalled a time when a guy lived in a van in the church parking lot and cleaned the bathrooms.

- It was noted that there is safety in numbers - risk is easier to accept in groups.

-It was also discussed that taking risk helped gain appreciation for the blessings we have and for an appreciation of other people, cultures, and circumstances.

-When taking risk the group discussed the need to be focused- have goals- a stated purpose. Otherwise expectations can become a problem as there are often real limits to what is achievable.

- The group felt training and education on the front end of any mission endeavor that involves risk is important - education helps to mitigate risk - better prepares you

Where we take risk -

- The group felt we did it with Int'l Mission Trips an youth trips - worried parents!!!

-Risk in deciding where to go - need to have good on the ground partners

-Hard risks - Illness/liability

-The group discussed the fact that risky mission work might not always feel good. Work may go unappreciated, give gifts to families with big flat screen TV's, but are in need because they have their priorities wrong

-In response to a discussion on where would Jesus' be working today - where is risk in our society?

-Immigration

-Int'l War Torn Regions/Genocide

- Gangs/street violence/drugs/guns

-Homeless/Hungry

-Oppression of Women -Domestic Violence

-Sex Trafficking

-It was noted a link between these issues and advocacy - although that link was not greatly explored as another group had that topic.

-Finally we discussed should the church take on more risk with its mission work. We decided we should be open to doing so and that we should look to mitigate risk by working in groups, education, and training.

Question #7

Mission work and advocacy can be closely related. What, as a Congregation, is our calling in terms of being advocates for certain causes?

--Should we advocate for public policies at the local/state/national level? Example: Affordable housing, Hunger, Support for Faith Based Initiatives, Environmental Stewardship

--Should we offer more opportunities for individual members to engage in more advocacy should they feel a calling?

- The Book of Order states that no church organization can bind members' consciences
- Westminster members probably would not agree on most advocacy issues
- Westminster could publicize opportunities for public volunteer service on organizations such as Alexandria City Council committees and the School Board
- There was support for more adult education offerings that cover both sides of issues such as the one held recently on health care reform
- There are opportunities of volunteer for Presbytery committees that are concerned about many advocacy issues
- Westminster members have diverse positions and we would run the risk of alienating some if we took an official position

Sticky Board for New Ideas and Questions

Babysitting for families who want to do mission.

Would love to see a service based on mission like at OPMH to connect worship and mission more.

Educate members about potential definitions of mission – all we do is serve others (as Christ teaches us) both within the church and once we leave the parking lot.

Saturday evening casual worship for young families.

Combined local/national mission activities with OTHER Presbyterian churches.

Continue to develop new education programs related to our mission projects:

1. Needs of Appalachia
2. South Dakota
3. DC
4. DC Suburbs

We may have already considered this- but it might be worth asking members to “pledge” to join one hands-on activity during the year. Knowing they have “pledged” might help people overcome initial hesitation. Instead of having announcements go in one ear and out the other, people might be more active about thinking about which of those opportunities they will join, rather than whether.

What interest does Patrick have in inviting some young adults to the SH mission trips? This worked well in the DR – but it does change the character of the group – and it might not work as well every time.

New idea: Maybe we should define “local” for mission within our Presbytery geographical boundaries.

New idea: Partner with one of the churches that rank 1-8 in percentage of mission giving in Presbytery on a mission activity (time/talent) or financial giving program.

“Grace” at Bag Lunch (or an alternative). “We have enjoyed making this lunch for you today. We have helped you. Please pass it on.” (or something similar).

I like the idea of sending a van to one of the mission projects (maybe Carpenter’s Shelter or the home for recently imprisoned women?) to bring them to worship. Connects evangelism with “taking risks” and telling members what we do.

Inter-faith social groups for couples.

Related to how people who are home-bound or elderly could do mission – utilizing skills such as knitting to make projects (such as babies in NICU). Perhaps others could even buy their materials.

Good stewardship of the building: AA, Preschool, Garden club, Boy Scouts, Other outside groups

Examples of Mission in Other Parts/Life of Westminster

Education

Adult Education programs on mission – for example – last November a Sunday class devoted to making bag lunch sandwiches and talking about local missions

Adult Ed class on relating to Christians from various cultural backgrounds

Christ and Culture class

Mission motivates helping and teaching and sharing

Inquirer’s class for those seeking to understand Christianity/Presbyterianism

Education - Children in Worship – Creation Station – Teaching

Assistant superintendent

Education stripping of elements

M& M Week mission components and education

Sponsoring my niece to go on mission to Kenya

Funding Moi’s Bridge scholarships

Mission Funding via stewardship hopefully helps educate members about our mission activities

Confirmation class/Mission activity and fellowship retreat and worship in another church

The youth mission trip to D.R. had lots of elements of all 4. Particularly worship services. Not only worship, but fellowship with our DR friends, education of ourselves, mission to the community there.

Creation Station- various mission projects
Children at Creation Station making sandwiches for lunch program.
George Mason tutoring for me is not just a chance to help a student, but is fellowship with my fellow tutors and my student.
Learning new home skills working with Habitat for Humanity, ALIVE, etc.
Preschool scholarships
Recycling
M & M Week
Missions are educational
Serving as a Deacon is Education
Mission Service – food to poor educates about needs we just don't see
Sunday School – Education and Mission
George Mason Tutoring – mission, education and fellowship
Creation Station making cookie mix to sell for Moi's Bridge (and bean soup too)
Members of A & F mission and financial education
Members of Session educate and mission

Worship

CHESS & other Minutes for Mission in Worship
Minute for Mission
Plan Sunday worship and music to serve for the community
Worship & the choir – we are a group who gathers to assist worship, but we also join to do mission activities like adopt a family
Choir leads music in worship, is a fellowship group and participates in local mission activities
Choir – adopt a family
Non-members weddings and funerals
Deacons delivering communion
Outreach worship – homebound (Deacons), visit, communion, flowers
Mission teaches faith practiced by others
OFHS- Worship and Mission
Vespers
Music concert series (e.g. Valetina Lisitsa)
Excess Easter and Christmas flower monies for mission project
Remembrance Sunday draws others and addresses America's role in the world
Session worship (communion), fellowship, education (officer training), mission (furthering the budget)
The Haiti Concert
Pulpit – guest ministers like Rev. Chege
Intinction
Carpenter's Shelter
Women's Retreat
Alternative Giving Bazaar

Fellowship

Circle Benevolence Funds
Christmas Offering
Circles do mission through fellowship – Salvation Army stockings, adopt a family, etc

Circles adopting families or senior citizens to sponsor during the year
Rachel Circle provides some financial support, tutoring, mentoring to one family or an ongoing fund
Retreats – women’s, men’s, youth, family
Choir sponsors a needy family at Christmas
Relationship with Agudas, shows open environment
Coffee Café, good will donations taken at the door
Hosting Coffee Hour
Carpenter’s Shelter
Youth Fellowship – adopt a family
Making Valentine’s Day cards with the Youth for delivery to Goodwin House
Mission trips create fellowship for members of WPC to know each other and learn about each other
Mission trips and Circles are fellowship building and all do mission
Demonstrates faith to others
Mission encourages giving
Rebuilding Together
Flying Solo makes Sandwiches, adopt a family
Bag Lunch helping the poor
Soliciting the Congregation to make sandwiches for Bag Lunch
Serving as a deacon, elder
Choir picnic
Potluck with a Purpose
Being a greeter is an act of fellowship. Many times it is the precursor to worship. As a greeter I sometimes am educated, and I hope at rare times I educate.
Concert for Haiti – raise funds for a worthy cause while bringing the Congregation and community together
Shanghai Group (with non-members)
Music presentations, concerts
Least coin contributions
Book Group
Craft Group – outreach to non-members
Welcoming, rather than disdaining, the once-yearly visitors at Easter to our church. ☺
Members of A & F
Pastoral counseling about issues of service through politics, work, community involvement
Turkey delivery at Thanksgiving