

Memo to Presbytery from The Purpose/Discernment Task Force
May 12, 2005

Please read this letter carefully and in its entirety! It's about the future of our Presbytery.

Last fall, the Coordinating Council appointed a group to help lead our Presbytery through this time of transition – a rather lengthy process which really began for us nearly ten years ago. The group is called the Purpose/Discernment Task Force. The name intends to signify that we need to do more than merely revise our vision statement or have another mission study. In a time of great and relentless change all around us, we need to discern where God is calling us to make fundamental changes in the life and purpose of our presbytery – in who we are and what we do as a part of the body of Christ.

After several months of working together, the Task Force needs now to broaden its reach by soliciting comments, thoughts and feedback from across the whole presbytery. That's the purpose of the attached document. It represents our deliberations to date about the future shape and focus of Transylvania Presbytery. We've expressed it in terms of characteristics we feel our presbytery needs to display in order to remain effective and faithful in the coming years.

We also feel a need to begin this process of looking forward by getting in touch with our past, i.e., by confessing some of the mistakes, missteps and miscues in our history. In just a few minutes at a recent meeting, we came up with the following:

- The relocating of the presbytery offices
- Our practice of handling/avoiding conflict
- The lack of follow-through on various projects
- The experience with our recent General Presbyter
- The visioning process
- Our new church development project
- The closing of our branch office in Hazard
- The yet-to-be-completed capital funds campaign
- The fiscal instability of Burnamwood
- Our ongoing budget crisis
- Our inattention to nurturing relationships

We don't want this to be an exercise in putting ourselves down for past failures; rather, we think it's important to repent – to hand over to God our past (with **all** of its successes and failures) and move deliberately into God's future – if we are to turn in a genuinely new direction. We're sure that others can add to our list; if we are to be renewed, then what those specific items might be is far less important than the idea that we commit ourselves to God's future.

The attached document is laid out in a way intended to invite you to jot down your ideas, responses and comments. It begins with our current "Mission Statement" as a point of reference, then notes the characteristics we feel are important for our presbytery to have, and then some ideas about traits needed in the person called to be our General Presbyter.

We hope you'll take some time to read and reflect on our ideas. Then please jot down your notes, and bring them to the June 10th meeting of Presbytery at Maysville. We'll plan to spend a major block of time – much as we did at the last presbytery meeting – in various groupings to discuss this whole matter.

We look forward to seeing you there. And thanks for your help with this important task.

Susan Alley
Bill Bailey

The Purpose/Discernment Task Force

Kent Berry David Renwick
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**Recommendations to the
Transylvania Presbytery
From the Purpose/Discernment Task Force**

In 1997 Transylvania Presbytery adopted the following Mission Statement:

The mission of Transylvania Presbytery is to be a family of churches wherein all congregations are helping each congregation to be the best Presbyterian Church it can be by calling people to faith and service in the name of Jesus Christ. To that end we commit ourselves:

**to proclaim the Good News*

**to renew our congregation*

**to strengthen outreach and social concern*

**to prepare children, youth and adults to live Christian lives*

**to enhance communication within the family of churches*

**to affirm, support, encourage and nurture all men and women who are called to ministries, and their families*

**to renew our vision continually.*

In 2006, as we initiate our search for a General Presbyter, the Purpose/Discernment Task Force appointed by the Coordinating Council has reached a consensus that the following characteristics of our Presbytery should be refined and enhanced in our efforts to build a faithful life together:

◆ ATMOSPHERE

- Proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel in Word and Deed.

Comments: _____

- Vibrant corporate worship experiences at Presbytery events.

Comments: _____

- Extending a helping hand in the name of Christ by developing partnerships with people in need, congregations, and ecumenical bodies.

Comments: _____

- Hospitality.

Comments: _____

- Responsible discourse on matters of faith and practice.

Comments: _____

◆ **PASTORAL LEADERSHIP**

- A system where pastors are ministered to, nurtured and encouraged by defined leaders.
- Consistent support for strengthening congregational ministries.

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

◆ **CONNECTIONALISM**

- A growing sense of connection, unity and fellowship among our congregations.
- A focus on mission by facilitating multi-congregational mission projects.
- Community building and community care in a healthy structure to achieve specific goals.

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

◆ **PROGRAM LEADERSHIP**

- Effective evangelism with youth and young families, with an emphasis on supporting and helping to develop the programs at Burnamwood.

Comments: _____

◆ **ADMINISTRATION**

- Accomplish the business, financial and operational tasks of the Presbytery in a healthy organizational structure.

Comments: _____

Therefore, the Search Committee for a new General Presbyter is encouraged to assess the following traits of candidates under consideration:

◆ PASTORAL SKILLS.

▪ Demonstrated ability to help create and lead a system where pastors are ministered to, nurtured and encouraged by defined leaders.

▪ Extensive experience in congregational life and ministry.

▪ Demonstrated ability to manage conflict and inspire faith-based missional work.

▪ Demonstrated ability to support and encourage strong ministries to youth, including effective use of Burnamwood and relevant campus ministries

● CONNECTIONALISM.

▪ Demonstrated ability to use group facilitation skills to help create a growing sense of connection, unity and fellowship among congregations.

◆ LEADERSHIP

▪ Evident passion to lead from a beginning point to a defined conclusion.

◆ ADMINISTRATION

▪ Demonstrated management skills to accomplish the business, financial and operational tasks of Presbytery in a healthy organizational structure.

◆ PERSONALITY

Evident authentic, congruent life of faith with a strong sense of call to engage the diversity of this Presbytery.

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

Comments: _____

