

The Synod of the Trinity
Regional Connection for
Partnership and Networking
April 21-26, 2016

Connecting and Resourcing
Young Pastors/New Pastors

SUMMARY

Loudest Concern: Need for Connection

- Amidst needs for specific skill development and a greater awareness of the community of church/presbytery, the loudest call was around the need for community and help with the loneliness of the work
- New pastors know they are not the same as their parishioners but likewise don't know where or how to find their own community, either for themselves or their families.
- That loneliness is exacerbated for those under 40 because even though they may develop some pastor-to-pastor relationships, most of these are with folks in a different career/life category.
- This is an issue of health, well-being and spirituality

Need for: Mentor/Coach/Spiritual Direction and Network

- All four conversations loudly spoke about the need for individualized attention for new/younger pastors in the form of mentor/coach/spiritual director. Additionally, most recognized that there would need to be financial support to make this happen.
- In addition to individualized support, an active network -- whether local, regional or both -- emerged as a desire.
- Purposeful engagement with other pastors of similar experience level.
- In addition to connecting with age group or career group peers, there were several comments requesting additional forms of intentional networking: congregational size, ministry setting, geography. These might lead to other important ongoing affinity group connections
- Presbytery mentors could be a part of bringing larger group for connection together
- Accountability requirement

Some General Concern expressed:

- The label “young” can pigeon hole pastors as somehow “less than”
- Age doesn’t matter
- What experience transfers and what doesn’t? What counts as experience, only ordained?
- Maturity is different from age
- Gender and other demographic influence on age and newness
- Second career pastors feeling that their “newness” isn’t supported
- 40 and below is an imperfect cut-off for “young”
- Seminaries do not teach you to be a pastor!
- Young Pastor will NOT NECESSARILY bring in young families
- Heads up: we need and need to train young ruling elders
- Heads up: what about CREs and Christian Educators?

Available Resources: One size doesn’t fit all, but neither is anything currently universally available

- CREDO (Board of Pensions -- limited enrollment, two-year program)
- Spiritual Director, Coach
- CPE training if not had previously
- Company of New Pastors (PMA/seminaries -- limited enrollment)
- Clergy support groups in Presbytery/Region
- Regional/Local continuing ed
- Leadership incubator
- Leadership Development Team instead of CPM
- Leadership incubator to test skills, explore ministry and reflect in small group
- Bank of resources from members who serve other churches (could be for all pastors)
- Wee Kirk (or our own version in a presbytery or region?)
- Facebook group for pastors under 40
- Resource Concern: NEED FOR NEW PASTORS TO HAVE A SECOND SET OF SKILLS, POTENTIALLY BE BIVOCATIONAL AND NOT EXPECT TO GO FROM ORDINATION TO RETIREMENT ON CHURCH INCOME
- Face-to-face over Skype
- Project Burning Bush
- Use honorably retired pastors as resources
- Association of Christian Church (interdenominational)
- Church Planning Conference (NEXT Church)

Articulated Topical Resource Needs

- New Pastor Articulated Resource Needs Include:
 - Biggest challenge - worship planning - hymns, materials to help them get off the ground
 - Biggest hole was the Committee on Preparation of Ministry did not really give much guidance or supervision
 - Intentional building of camaraderie
 - Conflict management
 - How to take/live Sabbath
 - How to live in a ministry family for spouses and children
 - How to transition from academic to real life, seminary to congregation, new rhythm of life
 - Financial Debt
 - Ordered ministry may not be as shared as taught!
 - How to juggle ministry dreams with reality of a congregation/congregational need to shift
 - Lead a session meeting
 - How to cast a vision
 - Resource a church calling a new pastor to have appropriate expectations
 - Pastoral Leadership
 - Lead a positive congregation
 - How to offer care
 - Consulting vs. disciplines that enable churches to thrive
 - Duty vs. inspiration
 - Info about work styles
 - Info about generational differences
 - Needs a place to receive: affirmation needs, feedback needs
 - Info about working with staff

Possible Presbytery Roles with Young/New Pastors:

- Invite young pastors to presbytery leadership meetings
- CPM in new presbytery continue some kind of role with new pastors (or perhaps a subgroup of CPM or COM)
- Connect and resource new pastors
- Presbytery/church become a “welcome wagon” for new pastor and family (especially new pastors)
 - i.e. services, hospitals, shopping, other context specific resources. ALSO congregation/presbytery orientation to the culture and history of area (LOUD!)
- Develop way to support young pastor involvement in presbytery beyond local church

- Working with new pastors is a piece of working with/supporting all age groups of clergy
- Pay attention to all clergy regardless of age – age not a factor
- Presbytery “committee” GO OUT and meet with new pastor where he/she is
- Provide opportunities for worship/fellowship/communion with other pastors -- not mandated
- Attention to treat new and older pastors with equity
- Include new pastors in leadership of presbytery
- Committee available to assist those who know what they want but don’t know where to find it

Note: some presbyteries do currently work with new/young pastors: Donegal, Kiskiminetas, Beaver-Butler. Who else?

Synod Region/Presbytery Possibilities

- Bring Con Ed to “us,” re-evaluate what is needed or wanted
- Provide grant resources to aid in Con Ed, new pastor programs, etc.
- We need to put aside a sense of boundaries or poaching to gather people and provide resources
- How do we assist in creating meaningful relationships for the good of all?
- List/publicize resources and opportunities for gathering
- Synod could sponsor new pastors groups across the region :

2-3 years, presentations based on what is needed, colleague groups, relational emphases. How often meet? [Lakes and Prairies: twice a year plus 2 one-day gatherings. Note: most presbyteries don’t have critical mass for this (Presbytery might come along side this with a local gathering, consultant for skills, retreat)]

- Events that go with the flow vs. program

Books/Article Mentioned:

- a. *“A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix”* by Edwin H Friedman
- b. *“Entering Wonderland: A Toolkit for Pastors New to a Church”* by Robert A. Harris
- c. An article from **COVENANT**, Spring-Summer 2012 was shared. It is titled “The Challenge of Sustaining Fruitful Ministry” by Dr. Robert W. Burns and Dr. Tasha Chapman

APPENDIX

(Notes taken at regional meetings)

THURSDAY, APRIL 21 – at Allentown Presbyterian Church

- **Note-taker #1**
- This meeting was an eye-opener for me. I have a much greater respect, appreciation for the new pastors and family.
 - Worship with other pastors and partake of communion
 - Pay attention to all clergy regardless of age – age not a factor
 - Be invited to Presbytery leadership meeting
 - Feel disconnected with church and community—need to form partnership with other pastors in community.
 - Making new friends – lonely
 - Need network – Synod has resources to support pastor
 - New pastors – Need younger people as elders in church
 - Know what they want and need, don't know where to find it.
 - Continue information with CPM group in other Presbytery.
 - Connecting and resourcing new pastors
 - Presbytery doesn't care about age – Congregations care and it matters
 - No one worries about pastors – they are ignored and fall into the cracks and gaps. Need mentor to come along their side
 - 40-and-under – difficult to find connection to under-40 groups because they are parents -- living situation – new area
 - Presbytery needs to have contact as to what is a church – help in finding ways to do and help church
 - Need change of attitude. Need to get “oxygen” for self. It is hard to go into a neighborhood that you don't know. Give resource of names like people to call for help in keeping up the household. Give a list to pastor as they come into the community.
 - Purposeful engagement with other pastors of similar experience level.

One of the pastors in this group used CRATO and found it very useful. Another one has checked into the information for Synod of Lincoln Trails. One has spent time googling for help and her needs for area.

But most important they all need Spiritual direction and would welcome a mentor.

- **Note-taker #2**
 - the label ‘young’ can pigeon hole pastors as somehow “less than”
 - age doesn't matter
 - importance of coaching/mentoring
 - experience transfer and non-transfer
 - maturity different from age
 - gender and other demographic influence on age and newness

- second career pastors feeling that their “newness” is invincible
- accountability is needed
- 40 and below is an imperfect cut-off
- young pastors are hugely diverse in social settings and family situations
- there is need for other connections of people, not just age: congregational size, ministry setting, geography
- affinity groups must be more important than age or years of experience
- need to openly communicate to new pastors what is available as far as clergy support groups
- mentors for new and/or young clergy
- need for a presbytery “welcome wagon.”

Presbytery is good at – checkout Synod of Lincoln Trails!

- Grant resources,
- worshipping together,
- treat new and long term presbyters w/equity
- new pastors included in leadership of presbytery
- bring con-ed to us

Resources and Programs

- CREDO- over taxes, household not attending
- Company of New Pastors- not a good fit
- Continuing Ed is more fiscally attainable
- Leadership incubator

Partnerships

- Purposeful groups: 10, 15, 25 yr ordained synod gatherings
- Need to negate fear of poaching
- Support from Synod for already existing networks
- Circulate and celebrate existing programs and networks

WE NEED YOUNG RULING ELDERS

- **Newsprint**
 - i. Young is a pigeon hole
 - ii. Age doesn't matter
 - iii. Coaching and mentoring: What's helpful
 - iv. Does experience transfer?
 - v. Maturity not age-dependent
 - vi. Gender issues
 - vii. Older new pastors ignored

1. Good and negative
2. In the gap
- viii. Experience – what counts? Only ordained?
- ix. Difficult to find connections to under-40 pastors
 1. Parents
 2. Living situation
- x. Other connections
 1. Types of congregations
 2. Type of ministry
- xi. Meet around interests/affinity groups
- xii. Orientation to presbytery mentors? How assigned
- xiii. Need a different perspective – different attitudes
- xiv. New/young
 1. Geographic orientation
- xv. Early years of ministry
 1. What doing well?
 - B. Grant resources/don't have to do it on own
 - C. Worshipping together
 - D. Paying attention to all clergy
 - E. New invited to presbytery leadership
 - F. Company of new pastors
 - i. Exclusive group centered on good values (wasn't practical)
 - G. CREDO – content wonderful, disconnection is problematic
 - H. Continuing ed re-evaluated?
 - I. Organized events in presbytery for education
 - J. Haven't asked!
- xvi. Partnerships
 1. Fear of poaching? Scarcity mentality.
 2. Some networks are emerging organically
 3. Synod provide resources to support above
 4. Looking for friendship
 5. Need info
 6. Very few ruling elders
 7. New pastors and where went to seminary
 8. Saturate in connections
 - B. Involvement in churches but perhaps not a presbytery; Philly trying to overcome
- xvii. Purposeful engagement with people with similar experience level
 1. Synod of Lincoln Trails: What are they doing?
- xviii. New career CREDO – reunion
- xix. Know what we want – don't know where to find it
 1. Synod – listing of continuing ed possibilities

- 2. Continued conversations with CPM groups in other presbyteries
 - xx. Leadership Development Team instead of CPM
 - xxi. Spiritual direction
- Bank of resources from members to serve other churches

FRIDAY, APRIL 22 – at Krislund Camp and Conference Center

1) What are young pastors/new pastors saying about their needs? What are others observing?

2) PASTOR #1

- Member of Presbytery and Synod new pastor groups- feeling of camaraderie and sharing,
 - i. Synod more helpful-
 - 1. three years, presentations,
 - 2. direct the process, what do you need,
 - 3. what are the challenges you are facing,
 - 4. good mix of personalities,
 - 5. by final retreat only young, new pastors remained,
 - 6. everyone from Chicago
 - 7. met twice a year and twice a year regional gathering, optional not required
 - ii. Presbytery
 - 1. hired a consultant
 - 2. sat down quarterly,
 - 3. did training material and conversation,
 - 4. once a year retreat, verbatim and low key,
 - 5. two years
- Second call feels like he can call himself a pastor, before the feeling of being a fraud
- Needs to be a Synod program because the Presbyteries do not have critical mass
- Not programmatic but rather as needs arise- more individualistic
- Come together face to face with mentor and spiritual director and make it mandatory

3) PASTOR #2

- Second career, but still young,
 - i. moved from city to a small town
 - ii. Challenge to make a connection outside the church,
 - iii. Company of New Pastors
 - 1. met monthly at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, but then twice a year regionally,
 - 2. theological education,
 - 3. established ongoing education, but did not support all the areas of life
- Needed more support at the Presbytery level
- Had to find her own help
- CPE had helped set her up to claim her authority – her Pastoral Identity - as a pastor,
 - i. Her CPE was a chaplaincy program
 - ii. Presbyteries should require CPE!
 - iii. Seminaries do not teach you to be a pastor!
 - iv. Field education is very important because the seminaries need to be connected to the presbyteries

- v. Good field education can set a new pastor up for success or damage them in their first call
- vi. Committee on Preparation for Ministry very important!
- Conflict resolved by use of COM and elder mentor
- Included whole church in her marriage by doing it during the worship service which was healing!
- CREDO – invited by Board of Pensions - MoRanch
 - i. Seven days of worship and nurturing
 - ii. NEED TO BE MORE SPIRITUAL
 - iii. Call and recalled to same place
 - iv. NEED TO REINVENT ONE SELF!
 - v. Real values for meeting face to face
 - vi. CONTINUING ED MUST INCLUDE WORSHIP!
- Help churches to have appropriate expectations
 - i. Changes in culture
 - ii. Young pastor will NOT NECESSARILY bring in young families!

4) PASTOR #3

- Part-time call / first call
- Biggest challenge - worship planning - hymns, material to help them get off the ground
- Biggest hole was the Committee on Preparation of Ministry did not really give much guidance or supervision
- Suggestions were not helpful
- Good mentor now and can call
- Resources are needed but the pastor needs to choose what is needed

5) PASTOR #4

- Pastor spouses need support
- WEE KIRK CONFERENCE and other program that would build community
 - i. Take Ruling Elders!
 - ii. Only \$75!
 - iii. For new pastors in first call, build camaraderie
 - iv. KRISLUND would be an ideal location for this!!
 - 1. Presbytery could have something here for new pastors!
- Help churches think theologically – WHERE IS GOD IN THIS...?
- UNDER care or under CARE?
- YOUNG pastors (idealistic) and OLDER NEW pastors (know the darker side, the church conflicts)
- MENTORS in a presbytery bring people together

6) PASTOR #5

- How to manage conflict
- Definition of church by size
 - i. Unpack your bags, put down roots, get to know your people before your try to do too much – let them know you are staying...
- Realize that church is so different from seminary - transition from academic to congregation
 - i. People in pews not theologically where instructors from seminary are!
- Look among teaching and ruling elders to find those who have the gift to mentor spouses and new pastors

- Challenge to be single in rural situation
 - PAY ATTENTION TO SABBATH - REST
- 7) Johnnie Monroe - help for spouses and children
- 8) How can SYNOD support us?
- Provide SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS
 - i. What I miss about seminary are opportunities for worship and community
 - ii. Send Synod news to session members!
 - Pastor / Spouses support groups
 - Churches who are calling new or young pastors to have appropriate expectations
 - COST is a consideration
 - Company of New Pastors – helps them understand financial support, ongoing support
 - EQUIP
 - Regional events – NOT programs but ‘go with the flow’
 - i. After 911 – months later, ministers needed help!
 - Face-to-face over Skype
 - Project Burning Bush
 - Come face-to-face to form relationships with mentors – KEY
 - i. SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR is the key – Presbyteries should require this!
 - Resources – let pastor decide what is needed!
 - Use Honorably Retired pastors as mentors!
 - Recollections From Last Synod retreat
 - i. Soon-to-be Honorably Retired pastors talked about their transition – helped new pastors!
 - ii. Holy Spirit was at work!
 - iii. Reinventing your call...
 - iv. Lincoln Trails Synod – information to be shared
 - Train people for Stephen Ministry
 - i. Monthly meetings’
 - ii. Best at PRESBYTERY LEVEL
 - iii. Help the new pastors!

10. Newsprint

What are young/new pastors saying they need?

Camaraderie, isolation, connection

CPM

New Pastors need help managing conflicts

Need to understand church sizes to respond accordingly

Presbyteries need to find people who have a gift for mentoring

Importance of support to spouses and PK's

Facebook groups: Pastors under 40, pastors over 40

MONDAY, APRIL 25 – at Crestfield Camp and Conference Center

Question 1: What are young/new pastors saying about their needs?

- a. To pay off seminary and college debts.
- b. They come out of seminary and are put into the rhythm of parish life; often it is hard to become attuned to the place where you are.
- c. They need to know how to bridge the gap from seminary to real life; they are learning a new rhythm of life.
- d. Many of our churches are operating more as congregational churches than PCUSA churches.
- e. Not ordered ministry; pastor does it all.
- f. Sometimes ordered ministry gets in the way; the Book of Order is now open enough to interpret and give permission.
- g. There is a network of churches that partner – help – what partnerships look like – designated partnerships are an option.
- h. Some concerns about clergy and education:
 - a. We shouldn't ordain a pastor who doesn't have a second set of skills.
 - b. Don't count ordination to retirement income as the sole career.
 - c. Pick a vocation that could be bi-vocational.
 - d. Non-traditional leadership – CRE.
 - e. Soon some presbyteries will have more CREs than pastors.
 - f. Cathedral Model: Teaching Elders (pastors) will mentor CREs in nearby locations.
 - g. Seminaries are scheduled to close because there are less students.
 - h. Within 5-10 years of graduating from seminary, 50% of pastors leave the ministry.
- i. Every time a person joins a church you have a new church.
- j. Ideas for supporting young/new pastors:
 - a. Mentors – spiritual friends – individuals walking along beside you.
 - b. Ministry presence.
 - c. Kiski Presbytery – New Pastor Program.
 - d. Redstone, Washington, and Upper Ohio Valley presbyteries are offering CRE training together.
 - e. Donegal and Beaver-Butler have New Pastor Training.

Question 2: How do You Nurture Spirit and Soul?

1. Soul Care – how do you nurture spirit and soul?
 - f. We get too caught up in the work of secular business: finances; music; etc.
 - g. Pastoral coach
 - h. CREDO
 - i. Non-denominational coach: habits to shape you so you can answer God's call/how to be sustained in your spirit.
 - j. Pastoral coaching; how to fund it
 - k. Wayne Yost offers pastoral coaching
 - i. He charges \$35/hour funded with a 3 way program: pastor, church, and presbytery

- ii. There is the possibility of regional support with synod and even GA offering finances to make it a 4- or 5-way support
- I. Presbyteries need to work on this together to make it happen
- m. Beaver-Butler presbytery talks to folks monthly – gives wondering questions to answer
- n. It has to be caught, not taught
- o. How can you care for the soul?
 - i. No 65 hour weeks
 - ii. 12 hours over 3 days a week is too much
 - iii. Change mind set
 - iv. Can be helpful to see how other pastors do it
- 2. Today church is thought of as a volunteer organization
- 3. Church is not entertainment
- 4. It's not about fancy splashes
- 5. How do we provide resources for new pastors?
- 6. Provide an outline for new member assimilation
- 7. The Call
 - a. Specify what your expectations are
 - b. Congregations need to know they are hiring the pastor, not the family, unless they are co-pastors
 - c. They need to know how to:
 - i. Lead a Session meeting
 - ii. How to cast a vision
 - iii. Pastoral leadership
 - iv. Lead a positive congregation
 - v. Be open to various experiences
 - vi. Offer care to members of congregation
 - d. Kennon Callahan -
 - i. Tell them you love them
 - ii. Listen to their stories
 - iii. Tell them about what you learned
 - iv. Lead change at ordination
- 8. Suggestions for support of new pastors
 - a. Designated Partners for new pastors
 - b. Board of Pensions – training for new pastors
 - c. Company of Pastors
 - d. CREDO Pastoral Program
 - i. By invitation
 - ii. Mid-career
 - iii. Episcopalian program
- 9. Renewal
 - a. NUTS: Never Underestimate the Spirit
 - b. Local hospitality needs improved

- c. Change – managed change – synod could help churches
- d. Fear of lack of vision
- e. Consulting vs disciplines that enable churches to thrive
- f. Look at leadership

3. Conclusion - suggested resources:

- 2. The following books were suggested:
 - a. *“A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix”* by Edwin H Friedman
 - b. *“Entering Wonderland: A Toolkit for Pastors New to a Church”* by Robert A. Harris
- 3. An article from **COVENANT**, Spring-Summer 2012 was shared. It is titled “The Challenge of Sustaining Fruitful Ministry” by Dr. Robert W. Burns and Dr. Tasha Chapman

TUESDAY, APRIL 26 – at Morgantown Presbyterian Church

- i. View of the Church
 - 1. Challenges – new vs. maintenance
 - 2. Hired for youth – stuck in institution
 - 3. Vehemence – call availability vs. slow retirements
 - 4. Debts, financial risks
 - 5. Louisville, Princeton – free
 - 6. How do we accomplish long-term?
- ii. Orientation to culture/history
- iii. Orientation to ministry as mission
- iv. Resource packet – social services, who call, hospitals
- v. Send committee members out to meet new pastors where they are
- vi. Peer groups
- vii. Women’s clergy group – lunch once a month
- viii. Where do CRE’s and educators fit?
- ix. Peer to peer
- x. Ways Presbyteries support
 - 1. Mentors – newly-ordained, new to presbyteries
 - a. What works?
 - b. Trouble connecting
 - c. Organic connections? To mentor?
 - d. Accountability/requirement
 - e. Temporary mentor lead to selecting permanent once selected
 - f. Coaching
 - g. How’s life? How you do this?
 - h. Relationships
- xi. What support systems in place?
- xii. What is the goal of mentoring?
- xiii. Why?
- xiv. New pastors orientation

- xv. National options
 - 2. Company of New Pastors (PCUSA/vocations, theology and worship; invitation only; starts in seminary)
 - 3. CREDO – Board of Pensions (invitation only, mid-career, new pastor – 2-year, holistic reflection)
 - 4. Association of Christian Church (interdenominational)
 - 5. Church Planning Conference (NEXT Church)
 - 6. Coaching organizations/leadership
- xvi. Time of transition in church
 - 7. What support structures in place?
 - 8. What education is there?
 - 9. What new ways at doing/supporting?
- xvii. Childcare
- xviii. Familiar support networks different
- xix. Spouse, family support
- xx. Who you call – presbytery
- xxi. How long until first call from seminary?
 - 10. What does research say?
 - a. What is reality?
 - b. Not taking calls
 - c. Holding out
 - d. Other jobs
- xxii. New Pastor Needs
 - 11. Work styles
 - a. generational differences
 - b. affirmation needs
 - c. feedback needs
 - d. working with staff
 - e. duty vs. inspiration
 - f. work-life expectation
- xxiii. Channels for asking questions (who, where)
- xxiv. Common questions people ask
- xxv. Directions/processes – hospital
- xxvi. What do presbyteries do?
- xxvii. Together
 - 12. Retreat
 - 13. Boundaries-crossing (presbytery/synod)
 - 14. Do we need better programs (or ways to create better relationships; “in this together”)
- xxviii. How are we investing in spiritual well-being of our colleagues?