

DISCOVERING AND CLAIMING OUR COMMON CALLING: OUR GUIDING VISION WITHIN COVENANT COMMUNITY

History of the Planning Process

In November 2012, the Presbytery acted to appoint members of the Administrative Commission on Governance. This Commission's authority, granted by the Presbytery, was to review the processes, governance, and structural organization of the Presbytery and to make specific recommendations to the Presbytery concerning these systemic elements. In part, this charge concerned what was then referred to as nFOG, the New Form of Government approved by the General Assembly in 2011. By late 2012, the Presbytery had not yet adopted the required structures, principles and practices required by nFOG and needed to catch up.

ACOG, co-moderated by TE Bob Wollenberg and RE Dr. Clint Rila, and resourced by Stated Clerk Dr. Rebecca Blair, embraced its responsibilities with seriousness and deep engagement, meeting every other week for nearly two years. At key points in the process, ACOG conducted surveys and listening posts at stated and called meetings to receive input and feedback on its work. The aim was to keep the Presbytery in the loop of its discussions and invite the Presbytery to share its hopes, aspirations, needs, concerns, and discernments with ACOG. At the conclusion of this planning period, ACOG presented to the Presbytery for discussion and subsequent adoption Vision and Identity Statements, including the Presbytery Gathering Vision Statement to be included on the front page of each stated meeting call including this one. It also articulated a set of Core Values to serve as the foundation for our work together as well as Priorities that flow from all of these statements about who we are and what we are called to do together. These statements are included below. In 2014, the Presbytery engaged in small group conversations using the World Café process to develop and approve a clear Mission Statement. This statement is also included below. The foundational statements of the Presbytery were now in place.

In Phase Two, ACOG sketched out a projected Presbytery structural framework that articulated the mission, ministry and administration of the Presbytery in six areas: Strategic Coordination, Ministerial Relations, Mission and Witness, Finance and Stewardship, Communications, and Administrative and Judicial. This plan included at its center the intention that the Presbytery would shift its cultural focus from being a staff-driven, vertically organized entity to one in which we live together as a covenant

community governed chiefly by elected groups of presbyters, a more horizontal organization in keeping with Presbyterian principles and practices. In short, we aimed to embrace and live out the central idea that we belong to one another.

The Presbytery's intention was to live through 2014 and into 2015 with a revised, yet provisional set of structures and an accompanying set of provisional Bylaws and Manual of Operations to determine how the structure worked in operation, and then to propose a fuller version of this plan for adoption by the Presbytery with an accompanying revision of the Bylaws and Manual of Operations as well as a fresh consideration of any necessary staff positions. During this time, the PCC generated three drafts of a Guiding Vision document to articulate this fuller vision of the Presbytery. We have now arrived at the point of considering this fully-detailed set of structures as articulated below.

Consideration and Implementation Process

The consideration process will proceed as follows: first reading and discussion at the November 16, 2017 stated meeting, second reading and vote at the January 13, 2018 stated meeting. Should this vote be favorable, the new structures would take effect retroactively as of 1 January 2018. The PCC will also bring to the January 13th stated meeting proposed revised Bylaws and Manual of Operations that accord with this new structure for first reading, if the way be clear, with an anticipated vote to adopt them at the March 2018 meeting. Similarly, the Nominating Committee will contact those persons currently serving on commissions, committees, and task forces to determine where they would like to serve in the new structure and will solicit additional folks to serve with the intention of presenting at the January 2018 stated meeting as complete a slate of nominations as possible to people the new structure, if the way be clear. Following the vote on the new structure at the January stated meeting, the Personnel Committee will then engage in discussion and bring proposals to the Presbytery concerning any staff positions, if the way be clear.

Rationale

From its inception ACOG covenanted with the Presbytery to listen carefully, discern deliberately, consult broadly, and pray constantly as it worked to produce a governance plan immersed in our Presbytery's identity, mission, and vision. The resultant plan below aims to

- Help us to live out God’s mission more vitally, intentionally and effectively in the context where God has called us. Our covenant live together is shaped by God’s mission revealed in Jesus Christ. Thus, our structures provide the means by which we fulfill God’s calling to us within covenant community so that we may serve others with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.
- Enable our Presbytery to grow in trust and love. As ACOG engaged in careful listening, we heard the pain and isolation of broken relationships of trust. This issue has remained as a concern of the PCC as it has engaged in strategic discussion and planning. The structures proposed here aim to open up Presbytery processes and invite all of us to participate together with transparency and accountability.
- Invite each of us to contribute our gifts and skills to further the Presbytery’s mission, ministry, and administration. ACOG identified gaps in the former structures that allowed some needs and function to remain unmet. These revised structures are focused upon engaging our diverse callings and areas of expertise to address these needs.
- Provide for effective, accountable handling of ordinary business items while allowing us to prioritize those issues of greatest import as we meet together. Note that some teams are authorized by the Presbytery to function as commissions with sets of responsibilities that they enact on its behalf.
- Ensure that the Presbytery meets its responsibilities as outline in the revised Form of Government to the broader covenant community of Presbyterians. This current Form of Government permits Presbyteries greater flexibility in structures and practices to respond to missional needs.



VISION AND IDENTITY

The Presbytery of East Iowa seeks to be a community in which God in Christ is present in our relationships, and the Spirit is apparent in our actions of welcome, hospitality, witness, leadership and service.

CORE VALUES

- Trust:** Reflecting who God calls us to be, we commit ourselves to one another through transparent actions that keep faith with one another
- Acceptance:** Appreciating the gifts and perspectives of everyone, but particularly those whose thoughts, preferences, and approaches differ from ours
- Community:** Fostering connections in the communities in which we are located, in the ecumenical church, and in cultures around the globe to share God's love in concrete actions of ministry and mission
- Collaboration:** Thinking, conversing, worshipping, discerning, and working together for the common good
- Imagination:** Dreaming together of new areas of service, new ways to relate, and new dimensions of our collective identity as the body of Christ
- Energy:** Displaying the vitality and passion of the Holy Spirit in our worship and our endeavors as servant leaders

Justice: Recognizing that God's creation includes fellow humans of all races, ethnicities, genders, classes, and stages of life, we minister beyond Presbytery boundaries to ensure justice for all people.

PRIORITIES

Our Vision, Identity, and Core Values lead us to prioritize the following dimensions of our lives together:

Congregational Vitality

Equipping congregations with resources and strategies that will enable them to effectively share God's love in the world and joyfully live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ as communities of faith, hope, love and witness.

Leadership Development

Developing effective servant leaders who can model discipleship as they engage in missional relationships with discernment, commitment, sensitivity and passion

Building Bridges and Enhancing Collaborative Opportunities

Fostering congregational networks, ecumenical and interfaith partnerships, social justice networks and engagement with community agencies that enable us to meaningfully address issues affecting the communities we serve.

MISSION STATEMENT PRESBYTERY OF EAST IOWA

The mission of the Presbytery of East Iowa is to further the Realm of God by living and acting in covenant relationship with one another and with the whole of God's creation to embody the Great Ends of the Church through

- Challenging presbyters and churches to continual missional learning, growth, experimentation, and engagement

- Faithfully stewarding our shared theological traditions, essential values, and resources
- Cultivating internal and external missional relationships and partnerships
- Calling and nurturing effective missional leaders
- Fostering creativity and excellence in all of our endeavors

MOTION [First Reading]: The PCC recommends that the Presbytery adopt the following committee structure for its operations, effective 1 January 2018.

PRESBYTERY OF EAST IOWA GUIDING VISION COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

❖ Presbytery Coordinating Commission

The PCC functions as the strategic leadership team that coordinates the ministry and mission for the Presbytery. This team is comprised of a teaching and ruling elder (one of which is the moderator) from each standing team and the Presbytery officers.

The PCC is commissioned to carry out aspects of the Presbytery's work in the following ways:

- Coordinate initiatives and activities among committees according to Presbytery strategic plan
- Work with the Committee on Leadership Development to develop and implement regular plans for growth in leadership skills for those serving in various capacities within the Presbytery, including an annual retreat to train Presbytery leaders
- Work with all committees to develop opportunities to work cooperatively with other presbyteries and ecumenical entities to fulfill their particular responsibilities
- In partnership with Stated Clerk:
 - coordinate agenda for business meetings of the Presbytery
 - facilitate planning for education and spiritual growth meetings of the Presbytery
 - propose a schedule (dates, times, & locations) for meetings of the Presbytery
 - call special meetings of the Presbytery when appropriate
 - communicate regularly with all committees to assure that work is done in a timely manner

Members:

Moderator of Presbytery

Vice-Moderator

Stated Clerk

Presbytery Team Moderators

Ministerial Relations Group

❖ Church Development & Vitality Team

The Church Development & Vitality Team carries out aspects of the Presbytery's mission and ministry in the following ways:

- Develops and supports ways in which the Presbytery, its congregations and pastors, its members engaged in validated ministries, and its new congregations, new worshiping communities, fellowship groups, and other non-congregational entities can fulfill the mission of God in Christ, guided particularly by the Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304)
- Promotes, supports, and coordinates the establishment of new congregations, new worshiping communities, fellowship groups, non-congregational entities, and other forms of corporate witness
- Supports congregations in the work of transformation, revitalization, and transition
- Proposes and administers Presbytery financial support for church development

Members:

Co-Chairs-Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder
9 members in classes of three

❖ Leadership Development Team

The Leadership Development Team:

- Works with the PCC to develop and implement regular plans for growth in pastoral leadership
- Develops skills for those serving in various capacities within the Presbytery, including an annual retreat to train Presbytery leaders
- Proposes and administers the Presbytery's financial support for preparation for ministry
- Cares for and supervises candidates and inquirers for ordination as Teaching Elders and supervises the preparation of Commissioned Ruling Elders
- Perform annual consultations with inquirers and candidates

This Team makes recommendations to the Presbytery to

- Enroll inquirers in covenant relationship with the Presbytery
- Transfer inquirers and candidates to other presbyteries
- Receive inquirers and candidates by transfer from other presbyteries

- Certify candidates ready to receive a call and give candidates permission to circulate the Personal Information Form
- Remove an individual from Inquirer or Candidate status

Members:

Co-Chairs-Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder

9 members in three classes

❖ **Ministers and Congregations Commission**

The Ministers and Congregations Commission carries out the following aspects of the Presbytery's mission and ministry.

This Team is commissioned to:

- Appoint administrative commissions of Presbytery for the purpose of ordaining and installing Ministers and Commissioned Ruling Elders to particular pastoral service with the responsibility to report all such appointments at the next meeting of Presbytery
- Approve renewals of terms of call and contracts for Ministers and Commissioned Ruling Elders with the responsibility to report all such appointments at the next meeting of Presbytery
- Make recommendations to the Presbytery regarding new terms of call and contracts
- Recommend Presbytery examination of and reception of Ministers of Word and Sacrament by transfer from other presbyteries for the purpose of accepting valid calls to ministry and membership in the Presbytery; and for membership in the Presbytery as at-large and honorably retired minister members
- Approve and review annually the work of all teaching elders and CREs engaged in validated ministries
- Counsel with sessions concerning reported difficulties within a congregation, including: (1) advising the session as to appropriate actions to be taken to resolve the reported difficulties, (2) offering to help as a mediator, and (3) acting to correct the difficulties if requested to do so by the session or if the session is unable or unwilling to do so, following the procedural safeguards of the Rules of Discipline
- Recommend to the Presbytery the appointment of administrative commissions with authority to assume original jurisdiction in any situation in which it determines that a session cannot exercise its authority

- Propose annually the minimum compensation standards for pastoral calls and Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators for approval by the Presbytery

Members:

Co-Chairs-Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder
9 members in three classes

❖ **Pastoral Care Team**

The Pastoral Care Team is organized by regions in the Presbytery so that pastors in need of care will be visited by neighboring colleagues. This ministry may be a vital one in which at-large and honorably retired minister members may serve. The team is distributed by region as follows:

- North Region: 4 care team members (16 churches)
- South Region: 5 care team members (22 churches)
- West Region: 4 care team members (16 churches)
- East Region: 4 care team members (17 churches)

Mission and Witness Group

❖ **Mission and Social Justice Team**

The Mission and Social Justice Team carries out aspects of the Presbytery's mission and social justice in the following ways:

- Encourages and supports ministry partnerships among congregations and ecumenical and interfaith organizations which fulfill the mission of church
- Promotes and supports ministries of social racial and environmental justice, peacemaking, and self-empowerment throughout the congregations and through other groups in the Presbytery
- Promotes and supports ministries of proclamation, evangelism, and discipleship throughout the congregations and through other groups in the Presbytery
- Proposes and administers the Presbytery's financial support for church mission

Members:

12 members in three classes

This Team will work in coordination with:

- **Peacemaking Task Force** (current structure retained)
- **Social Justice Catalyst/Self-Development of People Task Force** (8-12 members)

The Self-Development of People (SOOP) ministry affirms God's concern for humankind. We are Presbyterians and ecumenical partners dissatisfied with poverty and oppression, united in faith and action through sharing, confronting, and enabling by participating in the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people, seeking to change the structures that perpetuate poverty, oppression and injustice.

Finance and Stewardship Work Group

❖ Board of Trustees

The Presbytery shall have a board of seven trustees comprised of both ruling and teaching elders. Collectively these officers bear corporate responsibility for maintaining fiduciary trust, the legal duty to act solely in another party's interests. In this case, the Trustees act as a body to look after the financial and legal affairs of the Presbytery and its corporation with an obligation to act in a way that responsibly stewards the long-term interest of the larger church. The work of the Trustees involves attending to the affairs of the Presbytery corporation, oversight of special donations, financial accounts and restricted funds in accord with the Presbytery Financial Policy and managing the real property of the Presbytery and its constituent churches as necessary.

Members:

6 members in three classes

Presbytery Officers (Note: The Stated Clerk serves as Corporate Secretary)

❖ Budget & Finance Team

The Budget & Finance Team carries out aspects of the Presbytery's financial processes in the following ways:

- Prepares and proposes a budget for annual operating expenses to support the Presbytery's mission, ministry, and administrative operations
- Propose to the Presbytery the means to fund the operating budget
- Conduct a full financial review of all financial books and records every year, with professional external review at east every three years
- Present a financial report at each business meeting of the Presbytery
- Consult and coordinate with the Board of Trustees concerning financial issues impacting the Presbytery budget

- Consult and coordinate with the Personnel Committee concerning salary issues impacting the Presbytery budget

Members:

9 members in three classes

Administrative and Judicial Group

❖ **Office of the Stated Clerk**

❖ **Personnel Team**

The Personnel Team provides counsel, guidance, care, and advocacy support for the continuing officers and staff of the Presbytery as defined in the *Presbytery Employee Handbook*. The Team conducts an annual review of the Stated Clerk and continuing professional and support staff of the Presbytery. The Team shall also make recommendations to the Presbytery, through the Presbytery Coordinating Commission, concerning changes in the position descriptions and the compensation of officers, professional staff, and support staff.

Members:

6 members in three classes with the goal of at least one teaching elder and one ruling elder serving on the committee in rotating classes each for three (3) years.

Committee on Representation & Nomination

The Committee on Representation & Nominations carries out aspects constitutional functions on behalf of the Presbytery as follows:

- Advise the Presbytery regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity
- Advocate for diversity in Presbytery leadership
- Consult with the Presbytery on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403
- Nominate persons to serve in positions requiring election by the Presbytery, ensuring that nominations are broadly representative of the Presbytery and in conformity with the church's commitment to unity in diversity (F-1.0403)

Members:

6 members in three classes

❖ **Permanent Judicial Commission**

The Presbytery shall elect a Permanent Judicial Commission and the Permanent Judicial Commission shall function in accordance with the Book of Order (D- 5.0100 and following D- 5.0000). The Permanent Judicial Commission shall be composed of seven (7) members: three teaching elders, three ruling elders, and a seventh member who is either a teaching or ruling elder. The members of the Permanent Judicial Commission shall each come from different constituent churches, and the Presbytery Moderator shall designate a member to serve as convener. The members shall be elected by the Presbytery and shall serve a six-year term, subject to the provision of D-5.0100. The Stated Clerk shall advise this commission.

Members

As stated in current *Book of Order*

Communications Group (internal and external communications)

- ❖ **Communications** (Website, Social Media, Commission/Committee Communication)
- ❖ **Stated Clerk** (Ecclesiastical/Corporate Communication)