

Future Task Force Overview

At the January 20, 2007 Council meeting, Moderator Rev. Carrie Stine asked for volunteers and representatives from the original Future Task Force to review our implementation progress to date and to report back to Council. The catalysts for this request were a letter written by Rev. Bob Andrews regarding the cost of the Presbytery office space and the council's recognition that per capita is not covering our costs so mission dollars are used to support the Presbytery Office.

The following committee was assembled, Rev. Bob Andrews, chair, Rev. Bob Greer, Rev. Liz Hallen, Gene Gordon, CLP, Elder Martha Manning, Elder G. Ollie Wagner IV and Peter Wallace - Treasurer. Robert Shandry (Stated Clerk) and Rev Bill Knudsen (Presbytery Exec) were all solicited for their input. Our first meeting was held on April 18, 2007 where we received the output from the original Futures Task Force and learned about the history and methodology used.

The team continued to meet throughout the summer piggybacking on Presbytery and Council meetings where possible. We reviewed the (A) six mission priorities: 1) great worship, 2) great preachers and teachers, 3) great leadership training, 4) great congregational renewal, 5) great outreach to the hurting and searching and 6) great outreach to the young and young adults. We then looked at each of the recommendations under the broad categories of B) Committees of Presbytery, C) Presbytery Council, D) Finances, E) Communications, F) Pastoral Relations and Leadership, G) Presbytery Relations and H) Presbytery Meetings.

Although the evaluation request was raised because of financial concerns we wanted to assess all areas to determine "How are we doing?" on each of the original recommendations. The attached document lists all of our observations and comments. However, the team wanted to highlight some overarching recommendations they are as follows:

- 1) Council needs to take on a strategic role in planning for the future and timely assessment of progress. Our current method of funding the work of the Presbytery may carry us through the next ten years only, assuming no dramatic changes in number of churches, members and giving patterns. If we are not fully supporting the work of the Presbytery with current living donors by 2012 we should begin to negotiate alternative forms of leadership with neighboring Presbyteries.
- 2) Presbytery could share more best-in-class type learning from continuing education, mission recipients and successful programs in the congregations.
- 3) Earlier intervention with struggling churches may be needed to help them realistically assess their mission and future. At the same time some of the resource that is currently focused on small church renewal may be better used in supporting growing the larger congregations and in helping smaller churches fit into their success.
- 4) More in-depth search for leadership and spiritual gifts for various committees is needed.
- 5) We wish to applaud those responsible for successes, especially in the areas of: financial clarity and accountability, growth of the lay pastors, Knudsen's outreach to congregations, efficiency of communications from Presbytery, paperless Presbytery, Presbytery's educational and worship component, and Council for handling the day to day business.

Our Findings

What was our charge?

Purpose & Goals:

1. The mission of the Task is to carefully examine the recommendations of the “Committee on the Future” and evaluate the progress or lack of progress in attaining the recommendations adopted by the Presbytery in 2000.
2. The Taskforce is to evaluate structure, form, and function of the system not the performance of the personnel.
3. If a lack of progress in achieving these recommended goals has been caused by a member of the Presbytery staff those observations are to be recorded by the taskforce and sent to the Presbytery Personnel Committee for further review.

Procedures and Objectives:

1. Does the Presbytery carry out its adopted mission & vision statement (priorities)?
2. Is the Staffing Rational functioning as recommended?
3. Are the Committee Structures functioning as recommended?
4. Is the Council functioning as recommended?
5. Are the Ministry Tiers functioning as recommended?
6. Are the Presbytery Meetings functioning as recommended?
7. Request by Pastor Andrews—Review the presbytery finances to see if the Presbytery can afford our current office space?

What is the current statistical profile of Presbytery?

Statistical Data 2007

Comparative Statistics

	1999	2006
Active Membership	6,361	5,459
Number of Congregations	44	45
Median Size of Congregation [1999/2005]	102	86
Per member giving, validated mission [1999/2005]	\$41.79	\$46.86

Current worship attendance patterns

25 congregations have fewer than 50 per Sunday
 10 congregations have more than 100 per Sunday

Average Sunday worship attendance (45 Congregations)

0-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-125	126-150	151+
12	13	9	1	2	3	5

Average Sunday worship attendance 1999 (33 of 44 congregations reporting)

0-24	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-125	126-150	151+
5	10	5	5	2	3	3

Pastoral Leadership Profile

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benton | <input type="checkbox"/> Allenwood, Washington | <input type="checkbox"/> Lycoming Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Arnot, First |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Berwick, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Lewisburg, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Jersey Shore | <input type="checkbox"/> Coudersport, First |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bloomsburg, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Mifflinburg, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Linden | <input type="checkbox"/> Elkland, Parkhurst Memorial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Danville, Grove | <input type="checkbox"/> Milton, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Lock Haven | <input type="checkbox"/> Emporium, First |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Danville, Mahoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery, Grace | <input type="checkbox"/> Mill Hall | <input type="checkbox"/> Galeton, First |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elysburg | <input type="checkbox"/> Mooresburg | <input type="checkbox"/> Montoursville | <input type="checkbox"/> Mansfield, First |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mount Carmel, United | <input type="checkbox"/> Northumberland, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Muncy | <input type="checkbox"/> Nelson, Beechers Island |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orangeville | <input type="checkbox"/> Potts Grove, Chillisquaque | <input type="checkbox"/> Williamsport, Bethel | <input type="checkbox"/> Osceola |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Raven Creek | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunbury, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Covenant Central | <input type="checkbox"/> Renovo, First |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shamokin, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunbury, Mountain | <input type="checkbox"/> Williamsport, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Tioga, Trinity |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Watsontown, First | <input type="checkbox"/> Williamsport, Lycoming | <input type="checkbox"/> Wellsboro, First |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Williamsport, Northway | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Hanmaum Korean | |

Full Time Pastors (current or active PNC's for)	Part-time pastors, Temporary or Stated Supplies/Shared	CLP's	Vacant
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Berwick 2. Bloomsburg 3. Grove 4. Elysburg 5. Lock Haven 6. Allenwood 7. Coudersport 8. Covenant Central 9. Hanmaum Korean 10. Lycoming Centre 11. Emporium 12. Jersey Shore 13. Lewisburg 14. Milton 15. Montoursville 16. Northumberland 17. Northway 18. Wellsboro 19. First Williamsport 20. Lycoming 21. Watsontown 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mooresburg 2. Mahoning 3. Benton 4. Elysburg 5. Orangeville 6. Elkland 7. Osceola 8. Nelson 9. Arnot 10. Galeton 11. Linden 12. Orangeville 13. Sunbury 14. Lock Haven 15. Mill Hall 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mansfield 2. Mifflinburg 3. Potts Grove 4. Renovo 5. Shamokin 6. Mountain 7. Tioga 8. Watsontown 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Muncy 2. Mount Carmel 3. Bethel 4. Montgomery 5. Lock Haven 6. Allenwood 7. Coudersport 8. Covenant Central (till January) 9. Mill Hall 10. Berwick (9/15) 11. Wellsboro (January)

Of the 44 congregations in 1999:	Of the 45 congregations in 2007
<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 23 (52%) have or are attempting to call a full time pastor	<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 21 (46.66%) have or are attempting to call full time pastor (six have or soon will have active PNC's)
<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 5 are served by part-time Temporary or Stated Supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 23 are served by part-time Temporary or Stated Supplies or CLP's
<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 7 share pastors in cluster arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 6 share pastors (Orangeville, Raven Creek, Benton, Elkland, Nelson, Osceola)

<input type="checkbox"/> the remaining 9 congregations operate without regular pastoral leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 congregations lack regular pastoral leadership (Muncy, Mount Carmel, Bethel, Montgomery, Allenwood, Coudersport)
<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 22 congregations (50%) are represented on either Presbytery committees or council	<input type="checkbox"/> a total of 22 congregations are represented on either Presbytery committees or council
<input type="checkbox"/> from June, '95, to March, '99, an average of 17.25 congregations (39%) failed to send a commissioner per Presbytery meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> All churches at one time or another fail to send commissioner. No specific pattern, accordingly to Shandry, though smaller congregations attend less frequently
<input type="checkbox"/> 14% of our congregations are located in the country, 28% in villages, 50% in towns, 8% in a city	<input type="checkbox"/>

Means for Evaluating the New Design

Presbytery will know that the proposal is working when:

PHASE ONE – YEAR 2000

- The Presbyteries of Huntingdon and Northumberland establish their mutual and respective goals
- The proposal passes the Synod consultation arranged by Presbytery Council
- Presbytery Council approves and adopts the proposal (the Special Committee on the Future, as an ad hoc group, continues to monitor and advise the transition of the committees, staff review, Tier development, revision of Manual, and the financial restructuring)
- Presbytery Council presents their adopted proposal to Presbytery for its deliberation
- Northumberland Presbytery proceeds to establish immediately its own office within the boundaries of the Presbytery and calls our own Interim part-time Executive Presbyter; Council negotiates the terms of the de-yoking with regard to shared assets
- The Presbytery of Northumberland approves and adopts the proposal
- David Vogan and Rose Phillips have been honored for their loyal service to the Church of Jesus Christ

PHASE TWO – YEAR 2001

- The committees begin drafting according to the transition steps their own job descriptions based upon the vision and the mission priorities and the expectations articulated by the Special Committee on the Future
- The task force on congregational viability is active
- Presbytery begins soliciting financial support for the ministry endowment fund
- The long range calendar reflects the principle of multi-tasking
- The financial accounts and accounting system has been reworked, clarified, and simplified so that even a novice to Presbytery can grasp our fiscal status
- Accounts have been pooled into a flexible ministry endowment fund
- Presbytery Council has tossed out the old budgets and invented a new zero sum budget, based upon actual receipts, identifying mission causes consistent with the new priorities as articulated by the Special Committee on the Future

- The Special Committee on the Future submits to Presbytery Council for adoption the new committee job descriptions
- Evaluations of the effectiveness of paid staff have been conducted and made public along with recommendations for improvement
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving in specialized ministries or as at-large members have all been established as Parish Associates
- The new manual has been drafted and approved
- The annual Presbytery Directory is ready for publication
- Former offices of Presbytery have been honored for their loyal service to the Church of Jesus Christ

PHASE THREE – YEAR 2002+

- The Presbyteries of Huntingdon and Northumberland celebrate their history of joint ministry
- The part-time Executive Presbyter hires a part-time Administrative Secretary and sets up the office within the boundaries of our Presbytery
- A search committee is established for a called part-time Executive Presbyter
- The worship services at our meetings of Presbytery are both memorable and inspiring, having recruited the finest speakers possible
- We see an increased number of preachers available for our congregations drawing from a richer, deeper, and more varied pulpit supply list
- Fewer vacant pulpits abound
- New faces, and especially younger faces, are involved in the work of the Presbytery
- Better attendance at Presbytery meetings and program events by congregations and clergy is shown
- Teams of leaders from our congregations attend the piggyback events
- Congregations and pastors make more effective use of electronic communications
- We have reduced the amount of paperwork
- We publish our own regular bi-monthly newsletter which serves to prepare commissioners for the Presbytery meetings
- We have lowered the expenses for the operation of the Presbytery, freeing more funds for missions
- We can afford what we do; our receipts from living donors match our mission giving and administrative expenses
- We see partnerships established between and amongst congregations in our Presbytery
- We see partnerships established between our Presbytery and other denominations in our region
- We see the Tier clergy gathering together on a regular basis
- Our communications with Huntingdon Presbytery are direct and unfiltered
- At the end of the year the ad hoc members of the Special Committee on the Future reconvenes to draft a report to Council evaluating whether the plan is fulfilling the Committee's expectations
- The Council reviews the adequacy of the job description for each committee

PHASE FOUR – YEAR 2004

- The Council repeats the Listening Sessions (asking the same questions as in the first series of Listening Sessions) and hears that there is greater clarity of purpose, process, and identity, as well as a better understanding of the work of Presbytery plus a greater familiarity of each other as colleagues and friends in ministry
- The committee chairpersons and members report in an evaluation form that they have been properly prepared and trained for their responsibilities

What are Our Observations?

A: Our Mission Priorities

Note, we addressed only the proposals recommended by the Special Committee on the Future and adopted by Council and Presbytery, the mission statement contained in the manual was not considered germane

Observations:

1. **Worship:** B+ because of alternate models demonstrated, good way to begin Presbytery
2. **Preachers and Teachers:** B because we are getting voices beyond ourselves
3. **Leadership training:** C because we get the basics only, nominal and complacent participation as some churches do their own or we fail to make the effort to take advantage of what is offered, increase in lay leadership
4. **Congregational renewal:** C+ , which is this high only because of Knudsen's outreach efforts, funds for ministry, growth of lay pastors
5. **Outreach to hurting and searching:** B because of funds for trips, support for flood victims, response to requests (keeping in mind that Presbytery's role is not to initiate)
6. **Young and young adults:** B because of Krislund, plus efforts to support chaplaincies and attempts at the Big Youth Group events

Recommendations:

1. Need to solicit more ideas for preachers, teachers, workshops from Presbytery
2. Tap local denominational leaders, University presidents, for speakers
3. Monitor the widening gulf between those congregations with worship attendance below or above 100 persons
4. Increase funding for CLP's continuing education and systemize goal setting so that they are more than chaplains but agents of renewal and vitality
5. Proactive planning needed rather than reactive, when the 'tipping point' of some crisis propels the congregation to seek change
6. Council needs to initiate strategic planning, the first step of which is dedicating a Presbytery meeting or special gatherings for Listening Sessions, using the questions originally used plus one new one:
 - ▲ **What comes to your mind when you hear the word Presbytery?**
 - ▲ **What aspects of Presbytery do you want to applaud?**
 - ▲ **What needs of your congregation are not being met by Presbytery?**
 - ▲ **What needs of your congregation are being met by Presbytery?**
 - ▲ **What is your perception of your congregation's relationship with Presbytery?**
 - ▲ **What aspects of Presbytery do you want to change?**
 - ▲ **Using Christ as our model, what are we doing well?**
 - ▲ **Using Christ as our model, what aren't we doing well?**
 - ▲ **What needs does your congregation have that Northumberland Presbytery can help you fulfill in the future?**
 - ▲ **How can Northumberland Presbytery better serve God through Jesus Christ?**
 - ▲ **Is there anything else you would like us to know?**
 - ▲ **What questions do you have for us?**
 - ▲ **If Presbytery must live on its living donors by the year 2012, how do we either reduce expenses or increase revenue?**

B: Committees of Presbytery

Observations:

1. Organization has been streamlined somewhat, yet not fully according to the plan, as Council has created more sub-specialty committees and other institutional aspects

2. Success depends much on who is leading; we owe a big debt of gratitude especially to the leaders of the Committee on Service and Committee on Worship and Nurture for their efforts to build on the plan
3. Committees may have originally targeted tasks and responsibilities upon which they would concentrate but they got lost along the way resulting in confusion about roles and who does what
4. There was some early confusion and misunderstandings about being task oriented, which led to some of the frustrations and the retreat to the old model of trying to do all for churches rather than responding to congregations and reducing the list of what they should do
5. Members aren't given much training or orientation
6. Committee of Service does focus on some programs along with the grant support
7. We seem to have remolded several of the old committees under new names (difficulty in letting go)
8. Not much focus on staffing committees with persons with particular gifts, mostly getting whomever is willing to serve. No master list of talent
9. Piggy back concept has been discarded
10. Open enrollment of committees not happening due to committees not meeting during Presbytery and lack of publicity about meetings.
11. Committees do get their work done.
12. Moderator role was changed by Council.
13. Didn't really slim down the size of committees
14. We still elect between two nominees to serve as commissioners
15. Some new blood showing up, guesstimate of 1/3 of those involved are newer
16. Chairpersons seem to be the same persons
17. Repeating old habits: focus seems to be on what should we be (numerically, theologically) rather than cultivating the conditions by which things will emerge and surprise us
18. Special Committee on Future was never invited back to assist the change. Presbytery got preoccupied by search for office and Executive and administrative changes
19. We have neglected to establish priorities annually
20. Committees rely upon effective Tiers which we don't have
21. We continue the decline in available members of Presbytery and volunteers for service

Recommendations:

1. Especially with the changes in committee leadership this year, there is a need to sit down, revisit the scope of responsibilities, and clarify who is doing what and who is going to actually implement with guidance from Council, with input solicited from members with special gifts in these ministry areas, as well as from the Presbytery at large
2. Reaffirm the notion that we cannot do it all; reduce the goals to do what we can do well
3. The leaders of the committees need to periodically meet and review expectations and responsibilities
4. The committees will report to Presbytery at least once a year what are their goals and expectations for the coming year
5. Practice piggyback whenever possible
6. We need a master list of talent to be obtained by sessions and pastors, annually submitting a list of persons in their congregation who have special gifts and are willing to share them with Presbytery
7. Rather than reinvent activities, cash in on and broker what local congregations are doing (such as, if a church is holding officer training then ask them to host and invite neighboring congregations)

C: Presbytery Council

Observations:

1. Council has fulfilled this role of being the decision maker, freeing Presbytery for more opportunities for enrichment and fellowship.
2. No linkage with Huntingdon except regarding Krislund and the Resource Center, along with occasional conferences or workshops; the liaison was never done

3. Seems little Presbytery relationship with other Presbyteries except via Knudsen and Shandry regarding administrative issues
4. Meetings have been changed from Saturday resulting in better attendance (ministers of word especially)
5. Congregations are not informed of the extended duties of someone called to serve on Council
6. Executive Committee has at times overstepped its scope by acting unilaterally on occasion in allocating funds and taking the recommendation to Presbytery, without prior consultation with Council or Committees.
7. No ambassadors from other denominations present
8. No long range calendar
9. Vision is done mostly by Knudsen
10. Ecumenical partnerships evidence by chaplaincy search, COM collaborations, perhaps in professional links through Knudsen and via local ecumenical relationships but not within the fabric of Presbytery
11. A+ in developing and monitoring the budget
12. More is coming to us electronically. The newsletter is sent with information but has not replaced the packet; packet is received early, and mostly we get important information well in advance (though there have been some times when motions were received and acted on without prior notice)
13. Executive Committee is the Board of Trustees
14. The task of reviewing and recommending actions on amendments has been neglected by Council
15. Membership: Tier representatives are visible if active, we have no pastoral consultant, no Huntingdon liaison, no observers
16. Docket is appropriately adjusted.
17. We do get moderator reports (as a pastor would at Session)

Recommendations:

1. Council members are commended for stepping up to the increased responsibilities
2. Need more and varied representation on council; the Nominating Committee needs to more aggressively identify needs of the Presbytery and the spiritual gifts of members, and then recruit different persons from the congregations. We must expand our base of volunteers
3. Members of congregations who serve on Council or Presbytery committee should be commissioned by their congregation to this ministry during a worship service
4. Council needs to develop long range planning, intentionally recovering (as per the description of the Presbytery meetings in the adopted report) the themes of the Presbytery meetings, the expected actions, as well as some of the piggyback or collateral activities
5. The Executive Committee will not take unilateral actions regarding allocation of funds, especially without consulting with the chairs of the committees and Council as a whole
6. Invite ambassadors from other denominations to attend our meetings
7. Council will regularly review and recommend actions on amendments

D: Finances

Observations:

1. Streamlining of treasuries and reports has been well done.
2. We credit Knudsen with reducing the rate of decline in membership
3. Two pots are still maintained but sensibly.
4. We get clear and understandable reports
5. We review and justify mission recipients only when external circumstance warrant
6. Still carry some old finance categories
7. Getting there with letting mission priorities determine mission recipients
8. Giving is static, though there is a slight shift from unified giving to designated giving (50-60%)
9. Percentages are reassessed annually and in consultation through Knudsen and Wallace
10. Have not done much interpretation.

11. Presbytery is doing better at being an “enabler” of mission in the local congregation, evidence by the grants, evangelism support, mission trips.
12. Did not erase and start fresh with mission recipients
13. Evaluation of the causes we support does occur via committees, but without much intentionality
14. Revolving Loan Fund is working fine, though it hasn’t been restricted to the small congregations.
15. Some funds have been allocated through the self-development (Jersey Shore, Lock Haven) but no endowment fund for creative ministries has been created
16. We have not as a Presbytery (except for Krislund) tried to capture funds from our wealthier members
17. Assistance to congregations has been successful via grants have taken place (Jersey Shore, Galetton, Tioga); it does require extensive leadership efforts, time, energy.
18. Presbytery via Knudsen and, to a degree, the Committee on Ministry are guiding struggling congregations to explore how to ministerial leadership
19. Larger congregations have expressed the desire to be involved with the growth of smaller congregations but either smaller congregations resist or there is no formal pairing or connection
20. Administrative Assistant does work a core of 20 hours
21. We have experienced a thousand member decline since this report was written and adopted
22. Per capita has been increased and mission funds reallocated so that more goes toward Presbytery mission.
23. As per capita increases, congregations are more aggressive in cleaning the roles
24. In effect, the Executive is being paid for full time ministry, though some revenue has been generated: \$6,000 raised through the extra work, preaching, workshops, interim from 12 congregations, worked with 10 congregations pro bono
25. Is preaching part of job or is there an expectation that he will receive honorarium?
26. Lots of efforts in laity renewal, empowering
27. Excluding \$6K investment in computers, we expected operational costs of \$6K. We now are at \$13K.
28. Piggybacking of facilities didn’t happen. We chose to lease instead at a cost of \$17K.
29. We continue to age and fade.
30. Fewer congregations are able financially to bring the caliber of talent into our pulpits to turn things around.
31. Fewer mission funds are going to General Assembly and Synod, more are going locally.
32. Local mission goes to support the Presbytery Executive.
33. Mission giving has remained stable (more is given by fewer persons), though special mission gifts have increased.
34. No paid Resource Center Coordinator
35. Pastoral Consultant duties are assumed by Presbytery Executive
36. We have a volunteer Treasury Service Finance Director.
37. There is a little redundancy for the Treasurer supplied by Administrative Assistant
38. There is no redundancy for Shandry except as provided by Knudsen
39. 2 vouchers still used, but the second in a very limited way
40. We have saved money by reducing the need for vouchers (central location, reduced meetings).
41. Saved some money by outsourcing printing, but that is about it

Recommendations:

1. On the basis of current giving and spending patterns, we can sustain the current model for only 5 to 10 more years. With the exception of the revolving loan fund, we then will have no reserves left. We are paying bills by use of our reserves. Changes to those patterns will require adjustments: either reduce expenses (looking first to the big ticket items of overhead, mission commitments, staff, then small ticket items such as posted thanks you for per capita contributions) or find ways to increase revenue (such as more mission giving to Presbytery or a major and realistic increase in the per capita)
2. We need to address the impact of continuing reductions in congregant’s (per capita) unified mission giving (mission support) and further reductions in the “Mission Assets.” Given attendance, active membership, and giving patterns, along with direct fundraising by Krislund, it is

- unlikely we will substantially increase revenue, therefore we have no choice but for Presbytery as a whole to decide how to begin reductions in the budget
3. Although creating an endowment fund for creative ministries still is a desirable notion, it should wait until the Krislund campaign is completed to avoid competing for the same deep pockets and estate giving
 4. The committee is concerned that the current pattern of using the Presbytery Mission Reserves (currently \$242,000) to balance the budget will continue to reduce the amount of Mission Reserves. By 2012 the Presbytery Council must begin to assess the available Reserves and make recommendations on how the Leadership Model and Presbytery expenses can be changed or modified to preserve the independence of the Northumberland Presbytery. Looking to re-align the Presbytery with a neighboring Presbytery should only be looked as a strategy of last resort. We really need to assess the model of how the Presbytery is structured beginning in 2012, so we can then assess the financial health of the Presbytery and how the resources should be used.
 5. Need more mission interpretation: to whom are we giving and why?
 6. Need to factor into economic projections the 5 extremely unhappy congregations, 3 potentially withholding giving to General Assembly, which, given our policy of giving all our pledge, it could cripple us
 7. Look at what Redstone is doing -- no per capita at all
 8. Need to clarify what it is that Presbytery can uniquely do (as opposed to a congregation)
 9. Causes need to justify why Presbytery should support them
 10. Annually evaluate all mission recipients (the United Way model) by them attending and reporting to a regular meeting of Presbytery: is our charity effective? what is produced by our support (such as, what is the pay back for our support of Krislund? How many young people are inspired to serve Christ through the church?)
 11. Focus more attention on growing the larger congregation rather than trying to turn around the smaller congregations; indeed, explore how the smaller congregations can fit into and support the work of the larger congregations

E: Communications

Observations:

1. Tech grants have and continue to achieve helping congregations get on line
2. Good progress in computer use and upgrade, though not all congregations have computers (but members do)
3. We have no technical 'guru' – websites and such are handled by the Presbytery office
4. Good website -- 4000 hits a month
5. We are not paperless but are moving in that direction.
6. Not all churches share newsletters so there is not total exchange learning taking place.
7. No volunteer newsletter editor, done by Presbytery Executive and Administrative Assistant
8. Newsletter is not used for Presbytery meetings
9. No bundling and distribution of information
10. Given postal rates, we may wish to revisit more aggressively how to cut back on post office mailings
11. Much is available on the website.
12. Little public communications about the activity of General Council except what is provided at Presbytery meetings and emails from Presbytery
13. Email, despite its limitations, is more frequently used, though there might be some overload of communication to the point where it is viewed by some more as SPAM than useful.
14. Other forms of technology should be evaluated for their effectiveness and possible use (e.g., broadcasting the keynote speakers); more intentional modeling of these resources.
15. Use of technology likely depends on whether or not the leader is technologically savvy
16. Directories are done in all cases with the exception of information about other denominations (not much cross pollination)
17. Manual is on website

18. No task force on changing or monitoring the content of the Manual -- mostly rests on Clerk's shoulders

Recommendations:

1. Avoid email overkill
2. Reduce further posted mail
3. Encourage inter church communications
4. Again, because we rely on the Tiers, attendance by pastors and other church leaders is essential

F: Pastoral Relations and Leadership

Observations:

1. Knudsen has been key and central to areas of leadership development and training as well as ecumenical collaboration, indeed, he is fulfilling the ministry to congregations previously carried out by committees.
2. We successfully detached from Huntingdon and proceeded to call an Executive
3. Most in Presbytery likely don't remember we once were affiliated with Huntingdon
4. Executive has met expectations with regard to the needs of Presbytery
5. His public visibility is limited to the Williamsport Area
6. Revenue produced by the Executive could be building, he certainly is busy as he is currently booked up to six months
7. Pastoral Tiers as forum for pastoral support, sharing, edification is a good concept, though not truly effective except in the Northern Tier. Southern Tier started strong but has faded (possibly due to larger theological and polity disagreements). Pastoral care and resource sharing could be much stronger and more intentional.
8. Tier conveners do attend and report, though without vote on council they feel superfluous
9. We do not require continuing education, though we do require that congregations subsidize such both financially and with time (CLP's and Pastors)
10. There is no monitoring or reporting to Presbytery of continuing education experiences of pastors
11. Presbytery has offered in-house educational events and retreats
12. Very little sharing of insights and learnings
13. Establishing specialized clergy as pastoral associates hasn't happened except where there might have been a pre-existing relationship.
14. The vision of a collegial and mutual sense of ministry has not been realized except in the few situations where there has been a personal connection (e.g., Lewisburg and Arnot, some of the Northern Tier communications and Wellsboro's intentional commitment to being a "mother church").
15. Naming the nearest pastor as moderator of vacant churches hasn't worked and often doesn't work. Moderating is done as an at-need basis, with the linkage determined by COM according to 1) geographical proximity, 2) theological compatibility, and 3) availability
16. Term of the Moderator of Presbytery has been reduced officially to two years as a voting member
17. Vice moderators are more employed in the work
18. Normally moderators are not trained even though OGA does offer yearly training for Moderators. Not all Presbytery Moderators take advantage of it.
19. Leadership development through the best possible speakers at Presbytery is going in the right direction (we could have more women as keynote speakers as well as those outside the Presbyterian family)
20. We do not bring groups from the congregations to benefit from the speakers
21. We seem to have returned to the commissioner model of getting whomever you can to attend rather than the elder who would benefit most from meeting
22. The 'flying fix it pan denominational team' hasn't happened. The new COM visitation model is the closest we have except for the Executive's outreach and consultations. We remain parochial and non-ecumenical.
23. Seminary internships subsidized by Presbytery hasn't happened

24. Scholarships for seminarians who would serve three years in our Presbytery haven't happened.
25. We are moving strongly and well in direction of trained elders through the lay preachers and CLP's.
26. Encouraging tent-making ministries hasn't happened in the strictest definition of a tent-maker, partly from negative reactions and from the Presbyterian Church's own fiscal policies that make this difficult; though we have 5 persons serving congregations who are employed outside the church.
27. Partnerships with neighboring congregations, whether Presbyterian or other, has happened only where there is a personal link. Several examples of this: Coudersport, Galeton, but still fairly restrained and limited, spotty rather than a holistic effort.

Recommendations:

1. In acknowledging that Presbytery is not viewed as the primary Christian community for our pastors (indeed, for most it barely is viewed as their secondary or tertiary community), we are free to encourage each to deepen his or her practice of community with the members of their congregations (disciplines of holding one's tongue, meekness, listening, helpfulness, bearing, proclaiming, authority, confession, communion) rather than try to force a sense of personal (as opposed to professional) connectedness with Presbytery. Spiritually rooted in the local soil, good fruit then may grow to benefit the Presbytery community.
2. Tiers are crucial for our ministry as a Presbytery, especially as an opportunity for exchanging ideas and building collegial collaboration. Tiers need to meet and discuss what professional value the Tier can provide to make it worthwhile for the pastoral leaders to participate (topics, books, structured forums, sharing of resources?)
3. Structure time at Presbytery for pastors and CLP's to report on their continuing education
4. Congregations ought more deliberately plan and discuss the forthcoming Presbytery meeting and recruit the elder and other members who would best benefit from the meeting; they should report back to the congregation during worship what insights and learnings were gained
5. Overture coterminous denominations and collaborate with them in putting together a team of the best pastors to serve as consultants
6. Worship and Nurture committee could benefit from recommendations from the body, indeed suggesting speakers, so that there is more general ownership in the planning, avoiding the top down decisions and cultivating a more grass roots participation and leadership (suggestion of evaluation form at every meeting for recommendations from congregations for speakers, nominees, ideas)
7. Consolidate funds for scholarships for Seminarians who then would return to serve the Presbytery in the capacity of assistant ministers in the larger congregations – shift the focus of attention and resources to grow the larger congregations
8. Highlight at Presbytery the specialized ministers and invite them to report on their work as well as where they worship and the nature of their connection with a congregation

G: Presbytery Relations

Observations:

1. Ecumenical ministries (pastoral care, evangelism, worship, mission, education) rarely happen except on the local level (such as Vacation Bible School)
2. Relationships with other Presbyteries hasn't happened and is neither encouraged nor intentional, except where Shandry and Knudsen are in contact with clerks from other Presbyteries around the Synod. Bill also has a good rapport with Carlisle and others. We do share pulpit supply lists.
3. Except for Krislund, the Resource Center, and the rare conference, little happens with Huntingdon
4. A regular five year mission study doesn't happen and hasn't happened (even though it is easy to keep a closet clean by regular maintenance than waiting until you have to move), resulting in no substantial reduction in the labors of the search committee process
5. No Task Force of Viability has been formed. The closest we come is the COM's Triennial visit or their work in the Northern Tier and the discussions of viability that do occur as the result of the

Executive's ministry. Issues of the future are dealt with as needed rather than systematically. It is done mostly via Bill's outreach and services, invitations often at the tipping point

Recommendations:

1. Acquaint non-Presbyterian pastors and leaders in how we operate
2. Form the Viability Task Force (under a less ominous name) mindful that the method is not to instruct, dictate, or impose on a congregation what its future will be but to educe from the congregation their own conclusions about how it can best employ its resources for its work and worship
3. Key is the empowering of the laity by clergy mindful of their role as teaching elders
4. Promote pulpit exchanges between our own congregations
5. Promote pulpit exchanges with non-Presbyterian congregations
6. Encourage the larger congregations to keep current with their strategic planning, inviting them to share their goals at Presbytery

H: Presbytery Meetings

Observations:

1. The business side of Presbytery has been substantially reduced
2. Commissioners are arriving on time and more remain until the end of Presbytery
3. The quality of worship and preachers has been substantially improved
4. Despite its usefulness in helping make decisions, posing the question before any action, "Does this activity help our congregations and clergy succeed on the front lines of ministry?" never has been highlighted or emphasized.
5. We have seen more efficient and more effective nurturing taking place
6. No collateral or piggy back emphasis, nor do we use the meetings as a clearing house of information and resource sharing.
7. Old model still is in force within the streamlined structure.
8. The dockets for each meeting are predictable, simplified, and standardized.
9. The theme focus of the meetings and the piggyback sessions hasn't happened
10. The early attempts to have committee plenary sessions during Presbytery were tried but didn't work (dilemma of choices, inappropriateness of last minute business, lack of sufficient time, confusion in involving the non-committee people or the non-commissioners on the committee)
11. We reduced the numbers on committees as well as the number of committees but are back where we were in struggling to fully staff committees.
12. Still follow the model of meeting in church buildings
13. The simplified docket has been adopted and followed, except for the smaller version of the consensus agenda. Docket seems to be working well, not too many orders of the day or late reports and only the rare last minute motion
14. Meetings are shorter, more informative and programmatic; there is less preoccupation with business.

Recommendations:

1. Invite seminary leaders to speak to Presbytery and answer questions about teaching, polity, and trends.
2. The clerk needs to track and annually report attendance patterns at Presbytery meetings, including the number of new elders attending and congregations that fail to send commissioners
3. At least once a year, recover the concept of committee meetings during Presbytery
4. Council implements a thematic approach to meeting content that encourages sharing best-in-class practices (e.g., Christian Education, mission), providing a cycle to the year
5. Congregations revisit who they are sending as commissioners. Encourage all elders, especially those and others who may especially benefit from the educational content (as in F:3 above)
6. Council cannot abdicate responsibility in reviewing and recommending actions on amendments

7. Keep worship simplified and shortened, avoiding letting longer worship cascade into longer meetings. Efficient meetings are attractive.
8. Pastor's attitude's toward Presbytery is key in encouraging elders to attend
9. continue focus on worship and teaching
10. Hold meetings at sites other than church buildings
11. Shorten the lunch hour
12. Continue employing the model of small group deliberation and discussion for processing the 'hot button' motions, always with an eye on moving toward consensus (admitting that we may not be culturally ready for or attuned to the Zambian model of deliberation)
13. Every meeting of the Presbytery, Presbytery Council, and Presbytery committees, begins and ends by posing and answering the mantra question: "Does this activity help our congregations and clergy succeed on the front lines of ministry? Do these activities and tasks keep us fixed on the vine?"