

TRANSFORMATION 2.0 – LISTENING & LEARNING...NOW WHAT?

Moving from listening to action at Union PC – “It’s really hard to do.”



When the Transformation 2.0 guiding team at Union Presbyterian Church started its listening work, members were surprised at what they found.

“I think people in the suburbs, we’ve all become so inward,” team member Shannon Eggleston says. “We’re like communities within communities. Outside of your neighborhood, with the exception of school functions, there aren’t a lot of connections to be made.”

The team cold-called and knocked on doors and started asking questions of community leaders. They found that residents appreciated the fact they were listening.

The next step comes as Union’s team takes the results of their listening, and devises experiments that can drive true cultural change in the congregation. They’ve already started some of that, including a

“Wheel of Transformation” game show during Sunday worship.

“We’re all trying to find solutions,” Eggleston says. “We keep listening and praying about it. It’s really hard to do.”

New Worshiping Community will tap into “thirst for a connection”



Troy Bronsink knows that there are plenty of people out there hungry for an experience with God. They just don’t need -- or want -- a church building to get there.

“Folks who have an aversion to religion, they still have a thirst for a connection to their Creator,” says Bronsink, an ordained Presbyterian pastor since 2006. “They just don’t know how to access that, and they aren’t going to go to church to seek that out.”

Bronsink’s offering to those people lies in Northside, where he has settled after moving here several years ago from Atlanta. He started a small group ministry called “All Who Gather.” And now he is partnering with the Presbytery to start a New Worshiping Community in Northside. Bronsink is working with the Congregational Development Task Force, the group managing Transformation 2.0. He hopes to find a space alongside a local microbrewery. And although the community will be distinct, he is working cooperatively with North Presbyterian Church, in the neighborhood, as well as Northminster Presbyterian and Redeemer Episcopal. Bronsink and members of the New Worshiping Community will be developing a center for retreats and spiritual direction as both a non-threatening neighborhood presence and an alternative long-range funding source. The CDTF hopes the partnership with Bronsink will be the first of many, expanding our Presbytery’s outreach and providing coaching, seed grants and other resources to entrepreneurial Christians like Bronsink. “I think there is an unmet need in communities like Northside, matched with an increasing capacity to organize around spiritual thirst in less threatening ways,” he says.

Report on new criteria for NWC partnerships

The Congregational Development Task Force has developed a policy for partnerships with New Worshiping Communities.

The first step is a relationship and coaching. In the second phase, that can lead to seed grants or sustaining grants.

The goal is to create an environment where NWCs can effectively minister to their communities while maintaining a productive Presbytery relationship.

To read the policy, visit the Transformation 2.0 page at www.cpresby.org.



Listening



Discerning



Experimenting



Evaluating



New Future