

TRANSFORMATION 2.0 **The Church Transforming**

Adopted by the Presbytery of Cincinnati 11/12/13

PROLOGUE: Luke 6:12-16

After just two chapters of ministry, opponents begin to wonder “what they might do to Jesus.” (Lk 6:11). Jesus responds to this threat in the very next verse by praying all night on the mountain. The next day “he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles:” (v13).

Jesus is going to make sure that his mission continues, no matter how bad things might get. In chapter 9 he sends the twelve to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (and to cast out demons). In chapter 10 seventy others are **sent** out ahead of him.

The twelve disciples are a sign of the twelve tribes of Israel. But, the twelve are not patriarchs; Jesus calls them apostles – ones who are sent. Jesus’ leaders are ones who are sent rather than ones who are pillars. The focus is on the mission of proclaiming the gospel, casting out demons and healing the sick. It is dynamic not static. It is spreading, not stagnating. It is growing, not declining. It is a kingdom that reaches the poor, the sick, the oppressed and the sorrowful with God’s love and forgiveness.

Today, the Presbytery of Cincinnati is seeing its participation in Christ’s mission shrink as many of its congregations decline in health and sustainability. From 2001 to 2011 the congregations of the presbytery lost fully 30% of its members. Congregations have fallen in size by 28%. Worship attendance and stewardship show similar declines. (See Appendix)

If the Presbytery of Cincinnati is to fulfill its mission to have congregations strong and vital enough to do mission, the presbytery must radically redirect its resources toward enabling the mission of its congregations.

The Presbytery of Cincinnati has significant available financial resources which could be directed toward addressing the future ministry/mission of churches in the presbytery.

TRANSFORMATION 2.0 *will direct up to \$500,000 for at least four years totaling \$2 million to congregations which have a vision to change. The change will focus on the Church’s apostolic mission of proclamation of God’s new way of life and can include ministries of healing, liberation and love. It will help new worshiping communities to start and established congregations to do new ministries. It will assist with vision, money and staffing for new initiatives.*

GOALS

1. By 2024 ten declining congregations will have become vital, growing, sustainable, mission-growing, faith-nurturing, Christ-worshiping and proclaiming congregations.
2. By 2024 develop ten new vital, sustainable, mission-growing, faith-nurturing, Christ-worshiping and proclaiming congregations or worshiping communities.
3. By 2024 increase by twenty the number of worshiping communities with full-time teaching elders.

STRATEGIES

1. By January 2014, identify presbytery-held and accessible funding sources.
2. By 2015 identify and develop other funding sources – e.g. grants, denominational sources, redirected legacies.
3. Every congregation will be encouraged to do a mission and ministry assessment by 2016 and decide whether to request presbytery guidance or assistance in strengthening their witness or redirecting their legacy.

STEPS

1. Direct Trustees to identify and remove impediments to using presbytery-held, self-restricted funds for use of the *Transformation 2.0* project, to be released as needed by Council's request subject to an annual effectiveness review.
2. Direct Council to appoint a Congregational Development Task Force (CDTF) with responsibility to carry-out the strategies and achieve the goals of Transformation 2.0.
 - a. Work with the consultant (#4 below especially 4.d)
 - b. Review proposals, measure results, recommend funding and discontinuation of funding.
 - c. Report actions, progress and support recommendations to Presbytery
3. Direct Council to annually develop a budget of up to \$500,000 that will include approximately
 - a. \$100,000 for a full-time consultant (total package)
 - b. funding for investing in congregations desiring change
 - c. funding for developing new congregations/worshipping communities
 - d. funding for pastoral support in congregations desiring change
4. Direct Council with Personnel Committee to hire a full-time Presbyterian consultant with expertise in transitional ministry, new church development and church revitalization for four years to
 - a. work with congregations to facilitate congregational development of a realistic vision to be a vital, sustainable, mission-growing, faith-nurturing and Christ-worshiping and proclaiming congregation and the steps to achieve it. The result could be
 - i. a proposal for funding for new mission or pastoral support
 - ii. other presbytery assistance
 - iii. a proposal for redirecting its legacy
 - b. coach congregational staff in visioning and re-vitalization
 - c. instigate vision conversations in congregations
 - d. work with CDTF
 - i. to identify target congregations
 - ii. to identify target areas in the presbytery for new worshipping communities and current congregational support
 - iii. to determine criteria for identifying congregations that are in need of support - \$, consultant, pastoral, and volunteer
 - e. consultant will not participate in day-to-day congregational operations

PROCESS

In keeping with the Transformation goal to have mission arise from congregations, *Transformation: 2.0* needs to be driven by congregations and presbytery as a whole and not directed by a consultant, CDTF, Council or staff. The process envisioned to elicit that participation would be for Council, staff, CDTF and later the consultant to stir congregations into self-inclusion with the lure of significant presbytery support. When resources – money, staff, volunteers – are being distributed, presbytery will participate in those decisions. The process to distribute resources will include

- a. Sessions: by asking them to recommend between certain proposals
- b. Presbytery: by voting on funding proposals
- c. CDTF: by
 1. developing and recommending funding criteria
 2. making an initial assessment of proposals
 3. targeting areas of need and recommending those to presbytery

SUMMARY

Transformation 2.0 will expend presbytery resources to enhance the ministry and mission of its congregations. Its success will depend on congregations looking at themselves and their community and dreaming about how they can meet the needs they see and become a vital congregation in their context. *Transformation 2.0* will engage the Presbytery of Cincinnati in its Apostolic mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God and bring it near in new ways.