

Blackhawk Presbytery Executive Council Report
September 11, 2018 Assembly Meeting

June 26th Council Meeting Report:

A final draft for a new process for selecting GA Commissioners and YAADs was approved and will be available for a first reading at the September presbytery meeting.

Loreen Stravers was voted in as the official Clerk of Council. Thanks Loreen! And many thanks to Laurie Walker who took wonderful minutes for us over the past year.

The Council agreed that we need to have a Vice Moderator of the Assembly nominee by the September Presbytery Assembly Meetings from here on out (Sept 11 for this year). The reason we want to do this is because we want to offer the incoming Vice Moderator the ability to attend the national PC(USA) Moderators' Training in the fall. Currently, our presbytery sends only the about-to-be Moderator to training right before they become Moderator. The reason we haven't sent the VM in the past is because we never have the name of the VM until after the training. So, waiting until the November Assembly meeting for a VM to be approved makes it impossible to send our VM to training. Many presbyteries send their VM to this training, as well as the incoming Moderator. We believe this will better prepare our VM for their year as VM as well as prepare them better to become the Moderator.

August 28th Council Meeting Report:

The Council has nominated Elder Kathy Linn, First Pres Galena, to the class of 2021 on the Nominating Committee. She has accepted. The Council has nominated Doug Forsberg to class of 2021 and to remain as Moderator of the Nominating Committee for 2019. Doug has accepted these nominations.

The Council has directed the Presbytery staff to begin posting the YTD per capita payments of Blackhawk Churches. There will be a link on <http://www.blackhawkpresbytery.org> home page and updates will be noted in the Presbytery Assembly Meeting documents among the financial reports.

The Council continues to work on strategic planning in order to help Blackhawk Presbytery live into its Vision and Value Statement:

Grounded in the biblical image for human community, as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, we challenge and support congregations to be thriving faith communities by facilitating competent leadership and resourcing to energize ministry and mission.

As Christians, guided by the principles of love, trust, open communication, and genuine relationships, we value each other as sisters and brothers in faith in all our varied theological understandings. Therefore, we relish respectful discussions of differing opinions as a necessary part of discerning the will of God.

As elegantly stated by our GP, John Rickard, we are seeking to facilitate "Faithful disciples doing the work of Christ in their context". We recognize that Blackhawk Presbytery's churches have a very wide range of contexts from small churches in the middle of the countryside to big churches in big cities. Our congregations, while alike in seeking to follow and serve Christ, are indeed all different. The challenge of how to help everyone is complex. It requires that we first study our contexts and the needs within.

Our initial goal is to first determine how to create a ‘tool’ to ‘operationalize’ a way in which we can challenge and support congregations to be thriving faith communities by facilitating competent leadership and resourcing to energize ministry and mission, while remaining respectful and mindful of our differing opinions, theological understandings, and contexts.

We will begin by helping our churches understand their own and collected contexts, as well as how we define ‘thriving’. From here, we can work toward helping create competent leadership in areas including: within the changing context; understanding and embracing ‘context’ and ‘change’ as well as ‘transitioning’ and ‘transformation’; finding and distributing resources/wisdom (people, literature, software, internet, etc.); customizing; sharing the ‘love’ in all things; wellness of body, mind and spirit; mentoring, training, continuing ed, etc.; assessments; understanding/discerning gifts for the here and now; building confidence, hope and positivity (celebrating); exposure to the presbytery and better communication from presbytery to congregation and from leadership in a congregation to the congregation; and building relationships.

At our February Presbytery Assembly Meeting, we will utilize the learning opportunity portion of the day to break into groups of churches of similar contexts and begin the conversation of ‘what is our context’ and ‘what does it mean to be thriving’. The typical former way of evaluating if a church is ‘thriving’ was by looking at Sunday morning attendance, active membership, and the budget. This no longer works in any of our contexts in today’s world. Thus, we must redefine what it is to be thriving within our context and then set out to help leadership within each congregation to lead the congregations in a path of transitioning among the internal and external changes in order to transform into a thriving congregation. And for those who find themselves to already be thriving, we seek to help the leadership keep this going and to be able to help their congregation to continually serve Christ to the best of their ability.

The Council will continue to work on this goal.

ITEMS FOR PRESBYTRY ASSEMBLY ACTION:

-Motion to update the Ecclesiastic Manual: The Council moves to update the Blackhawk Presbytery Ecclesiastic Manual to give the responsibilities of the no-longer Business Affairs Committee to the Council. (Thanks to John Rickard for revising the manual.)

-Motion to nominate Kathy Linn (First Pres, Galena) onto the Nominating Committee for both class of 2018 and 2021. (Mike erred at the June meeting and offered the name of Teresa Hagenbuch for Nominating Committee. Mike meant to offer Kathy’s name.)

-Motion to nominate Doug Forsberg to remain on the Nominating Committee for the class of 2021 and to also serve as the Nominating Committee Moderator for 2019.

-Present for first reading the revised process for BP selecting GA Commissioners and YAADS.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mike Selburg, Blackhawk Presbytery Executive Council Moderator