

Pastoral Leadership Options

Blackhawk Presbytery

rev. 08/21/2020

The Pastoral Leadership Options Exploration Team (PLOETs) set their sails at the end of 2019 in order to explore how the congregations of Blackhawk Presbytery can continue to worship in this ever-changing world, despite not having a called pastor; decrease in membership; and diminishing funds.

The team consisted of moderator Mike Selburg; staff Nancy Dolan, Eric Heinekamp (and pre-April 1, 2020, John Rickard); Mission Committee representatives Diane Jochum & Gene Archer; and COM representatives Catherine Martin, David Spaulding & Roy Backus.

The team has determined seven types of ways for a congregation to continue worshipping outside of the norm: These models are (in no particular order): Partnership (multi-point/yoked); Hub; Gathering; Subscription; Streaming; Rotation; and Destination.

The team recognizes that every congregation's issues, though often similar to others, are unique, as every congregation, location and period of time is unique. In such, the options presented are *suggestions* of ways a congregation can approach new opportunities to continue to worship together. These models are not to be looked at as each one being strictly done exactly as explained. Rather, they are suggestions for ways in which a congregation can move forward. It is possible to glean from more than one model and create a new personalized model. The hope is that these seven models will help spark the imagination and vision needed to help a congregation find something that will work for them.

The team anticipates that every congregation who is finding it difficult to continue to worship in a traditional sense will work with the Commission on Ministry (COM) to determine the unique needs and desires of the congregation. It would be appropriate for COM to walk with the congregation through an analysis process that would help the congregation better understand itself and what would best work for them in terms of worship. COM and congregations need to remain fluid when working on this process. The initial model chosen may not be the right one. It might be necessary for a church to try several possibilities, and even combinations, until they find what helps them worship together effectively.

The PLOETs decided to not create an analysis process for churches and COM to utilize. This is because every congregation is unique and the world is ever-changing. Also, the bulk of the team's work was performed during the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, and there was too much uncertainty as to what church life would look like for a congregation in their future. In such, COM is to determine the best way to reach out and work with each congregation to utilize this toolbox to find a worship solution. The team also did not go into greater detail as to how to accomplish each model, as the world is changing so fast that directions today may not work tomorrow. For instance, in order to choose the streaming option, a lot of technological issues must be addressed, and items purchased. But technology today is far behind the technology of tomorrow. In such, a step-by-step process of how to make it happen in 2020 is going to be different in the years to come. The steps are to be determined by COM and the congregation for each time and place.

The models are described below in paragraph form as well as in matrix form.

WORSHIP MODEL OPTIONS

Blackhawk Presbytery

Partnership (A.K.A.: Multi-Point/Yoked)

Basic idea: Two or more churches share a pastor (MWS or CP).

How it could work: Two or more churches who can't afford a full-time Pastor share the single Pastor (MWS or CP). The pastor preaches at both churches on a given Sunday. Time between services must allow for travel time. Sacraments are provided by the Pastor. Each congregation has its own building. Technology of each congregation needs to be compatible with the other congregations. Pastoral care is provided by the Pastor and per decision of each congregation's Session. Support staff is as-needed at each church, which could be shared with the other church(s). Churches and Pastors need to be affiliated with the PC(USA) and/or within the Reformed tradition. Each congregation has its own Session. Pastor moderates all Sessions and performs part-time pastoral work at the churches. The sharing of financial implications is negotiated between the congregations.

Hub

Basic idea: A Lead Pastor (MWS or CP) serves a specific church and leads a team of Campus Leaders (MWS, CP or Ruling Elder) at each of the churches.

How it could work: A lead pastor (MWS or CP) oversees a team of Campus Leaders. These Campus Leaders could be MWS, CP or possibly a Ruling Elder. It is possible for the Campus Leader to be a seminary student. The distribution of the Sacraments is dependent upon the configuration of each congregation. Presbytery approval must be granted. Each congregation has its own building. Technology of each congregation needs to be compatible with the other congregations. Pastoral care is provided by the Campus Leader and per decision of each congregation's Session. Support staff is as-needed at each church, which could be shared with the other church(s). Churches and Pastors need to be affiliated with the PC(USA) and/or within the Reformed tradition. All congregations share an over-arching Session. Lead Pastor moderates the Session. The sharing of financial implications is negotiated between the congregations.

Gathering

Basic idea: Geographically-close congregations join together for worship services with one worship leader (MWS or CP) and rotate between the different church buildings throughout the year. Churches keep their buildings and get to worship in them at specific times throughout the year, while gaining the attendance of other congregations. Churches could also partner with these other churches in their mission and ministry. Congregations could be with other PC(USA) churches or with others from the Reformed tradition (or a combination).

How it could work: Churches save a lot of money by sharing a pastor. Congregation members would need to be willing to travel. The timeframe for worshipping at each church is to be negotiated among the Sessions. The Pastor oversees the Sacraments. Each congregation has its own building. Technology of each congregation is as-needed. Pastoral care is provided by the Pastor and per decision of each congregation's Session. Support staff is as-needed at each church, which could be shared with the other church(s). Churches and Pastors need to be affiliated with the PC(USA) and/or within the Reformed tradition. Each congregation has its own Session. However, the congregations can choose to have a combined Session, per presbytery approval. The Pastor moderates all Sessions. The sharing of financial implications is negotiated between the congregations.

Subscription

Basic idea: Congregations can pay for a subscription of sermons and worship liturgy written by pastors in our Presbytery. Worship is led by Session-appointed Worship Leaders, including someone to deliver the sermons.

How it could work: There is no Pastor (MWS or CP) at these congregations. Congregations can pay for a subscription of sermons and worship liturgy written and assembled by pastors in our Presbytery. Worship is led by Session-appointed Worship Leaders, including someone to deliver the sermons. Pastors contracted in the Presbytery would also provide, at least one week in advance, an order of worship which would include a list of suggested hymns. Cost is a subscription fee.

Sacraments are appointed by the Presbytery, per request of the Session. Each congregation has its own building. Technology of each congregation is as-needed. Pastoral care is provided per the Session's decision. Support staff is as-needed at each church, which could be shared with the other church(s). Churches need to be affiliated with the PC(USA). Each congregation has its own Session. The presbytery appoints the Session Moderator. There is a subscription fee for this model.

Streaming

Basic idea: Congregations can stream worship services (minimally, sermons) happening at a different church (projected on screen or wall).

How it could work: There is no Pastor (MWS or CP) at these streaming congregations. Worship is lead at a host church, led by their Pastor, and celebrated at campus locations. A congregation livestreams a worship service from the host church. A campus church's Session can appoint Worship Leaders for their congregation. Each congregation has its own building. It requires a high level of technology for both the host church and the campus churches. Pastoral care is provided per the Session's decision. Support staff is as-needed at each church, which could be shared with the host church and/or other campus churches. Preferred denominational affiliation is PC(USA), but this could be in conjunction with congregations from the Reformed tradition. Each congregation has its own Session. The presbytery appoints the Session Moderator. There is a subscription fee for this service. Also, there is the technology costs incurred to be able to do this. The presbytery and/or synod may be able to help with costs.

Rotation

Basic idea: This model is inspired by our own Garden Plain Presbyterian Church. Guest worship leaders from the Reformed tradition rotate over a period of Sundays (depending on how many worship leaders the congregation acquires).

How it could work: There is no Pastor (MWS or CP) at these congregations. The schedule is set up per the Session, utilizing worship leaders who rotate weekly over a period of time, depending on how many Worship Leaders are in the lineup. Worship takes place in the congregation's church building. Once per quarter, or time to be determined by the Session, a Presbytery-appointed pastor (MWS or CP, possibly retired) leads worship and presides at Sacraments. Technology is as-needed. Pastoral care is provided per the Session's decision. Support staff is as-needed at each church. Denominational affiliation for the Worship leaders is to be within the PC(USA) or from the Reformed tradition. Each congregation has its own Session. The presbytery appoints the Session Moderator. Worship Leaders are paid a weekly honorarium.

Destination

Basic idea: Congregations bring in guest Pastors as Worship Leaders from the PC(USA) or Reformed tradition and provide for them housing and possible other perks during their visit.

How it could work: The church Session would provide the free lodging space, and possibly other perks, and set the parameters for its use and who the contact individuals are, along with their contact information. Bulletin information, provided by the visiting pastor in advance, would be sent via email to church secretary or a congregation member designated by the Session who completes the bulletins. Travel expenses to the location, food, and any other vacationing expenses are the responsibility of the visiting Pastor and family.

Worship takes place in the congregation's church building. Sacraments are appointed by the Presbytery, per request of the Session. Each congregation has its own building. Technology of each congregation is as-needed. Pastoral care is provided per the Session's decision. Support staff is as-needed at each church. Visiting Pastor Worship Leaders need to be affiliated with the PC(USA) or from the Reformed tradition. Each congregation has its own Session. The presbytery appoints the Session Moderator. This could also be utilized by a congregation during the time of a Pastor's sabbatical or vacation.

Additional Options

Congregations can take advantage of:

- Sharing office and worship staff with other congregations
- Partner with other churches in their community for occasional services or for other ministries and missions (Sunday School, Youth Group, mission projects, etc)
- Communal Space: congregations can either let go of their buildings and 'nest' in another church, building or home. Or a congregation can allow other congregations to 'nest' in their building, in exchange for rent money and possibly shared staff.

WORSHIP MODEL OPTIONS MATRIX: Blackhawk Presbytery Pastoral Leadership Options Exploration Team (Revised May 27, 2020)

	Worship Leadership	Worship (How)	Sacraments	Building	Technology	Pastoral Care	Support Staff	Affiliation	Elders	Moderator	Financial Implications
Partnership (Multi-point / Yoked)	One Pastor (MWS or CP) serving more than one congregation	In person worship	Provided by Pastor	Each congregation has own building	Compatible with other congregation(s)	Pastor & per Session of individual congregations	As needed at each church, could be shared	PC(USA) and/or within Reformed tradition	Each congregation has own Session	Pastor	Negotiated sharing of costs
Hub	Lead Pastor (MWS or CP) overseeing team of Campus Leaders	In person worship led by a Campus Leader	Depends on configuration of churches. Must have presbytery approval	Each congregation has own building	Compatible with other congregations	Campus Leader & per Session of individual congregations	As needed at each church, could be shared	PC(USA) and/or within Reformed tradition	Shared Session: overarching team of Elders among all congregations	Lead Pastor	Negotiated sharing of costs
Gathering	One Pastor (MWS or CP) shared among congregations	Rotating buildings	Pastor	Each congregation has own building	As needed	Pastor & per Session of individual congregations	Shared among churches	PC(USA) and/or within Reformed tradition	Each congregation has own Elders, could combine Sessions	Pastor	Negotiated sharing of costs
Subscription	Worship lay leaders per Session appointment	In person worship	As appointed by presbytery	Congregation has own building	As needed	Per Session	As needed	PC(USA)	Congregation has own Session	Appointed by Presbytery	Subscription fee
Streaming	Worship led at host church and celebrated at campus locations	In person worship via host's live-stream Worship service	Officiated at host church, led locally by presbytery-approved Campus Leader	Each congregation has own building	Requires high level of technology for host & campus locations	Per Session	As needed at each church, could be shared	PC(USA) preferred, but could be with others within Reformed tradition	Each congregation has own Session	Appointed by Presbytery	Technology cost and subscription fee
Rotation	Rotating guest Worship Leader	In person worship	As appointed by presbytery	Congregation has own building	As needed	Per Session	As needed	Worship Leaders from PC(USA) or Reformed tradition	Congregation has own Session	Appointed by Presbytery	Honorarium
Destination	Guest Worship Leader	In person worship	As appointed by presbytery	Congregation has own building	As needed	Per Session	As needed	Worship Leaders from PC(USA) or Reformed tradition	Congregation has own Session	Appointed by Presbytery	Provision for housing and possible perks