



MINUTES OF
LEADERSHIP CIRCLE
Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery

OF BRITISH COLUMBIA CONFERENCE
The United Church of Canada

November 3, 2011
WINFIELD UNITED CHURCH
LAKE COUNTRY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

- PRESENT** Norma Fraser, Elaine Diggle, Lily Watson, Dawne Taylor, Jim Hannah, Ian Fraser, Reta Robertson, Steve Hershey (Chair of Management Team), Ivy Thomas (Conference Minister), Graham Brownmiller (Secretary), Karen Medland (Chair)
- AUTHORITY & CALL TO ORDER** Pursuant to the authority of the 2011 Fall Meeting of Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery (KOP), the Leadership Circle of KOP was Called to Order at 10 am at Winfield United Church, Lake Country, BC and was declared open to conduct the business properly before it, Chair Karen Medland presiding. A quorum was present.
- WORSHIP & CHECK-IN** Karen Medland led us in worship and check-in.
- REFLECTION** The purpose of the day is to spend time doing the visionary work, which is the work of Leadership Circle. Karen Medland reminded us that we can reflect on the past, in order to move forward, but nothing in the past can be changed. Karen engaged us in this work through some questions and utilizing the Circle Process that Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery has been engaging in.
- i) What have you learned over the past 18 months (especially in this model)?
- that we have had successful connection at Presbytery meetings, more than the 'business' of Presbytery; AND that this has created an undercurrent of a lack of trust – we need to hold this tension
 - the value of Circle Conversations (both formal and informal)
 - we have learned to “swim when the tide is out”
 - everyone else is at a lower, common place of understanding – how to acknowledge the gifts and skills of the court, that they have the knowledge to deal with 'big issues' – or how do we lift the knowledge to bring them along
 - our structure and process doesn't match the culture that has been long cultivated
 - how Presbytery 'should' work (Ian Fraser's presentation)
 - How Working Units function / should function, especially without time at Presbytery Meetings – how can we nurture them
 - there is a disconnect between ownership & asking questions to receive informed responses
 - the disconnect between “there's something new here” and “same old, same old” – and how do our policies and the vision work together best
 - that it is difficult to 'get people excited about the church' at this level

- how easy it is to hold in front of us the wishfulness and how difficult it is to enact it
 - Presbytery should be so riveting that we don't want to miss / leave it
 - the Church is dying – and that is normal (we are always dying to old ways)
- ii) What do you believe the Presbytery has gained in the changes we have implemented?
- heightened awareness of gifts & skills of the people in our contexts
 - big picture opportunities
 - continuing to see the evolution of fellowship / trust / camaraderie of clergy
 - the promise of flexibility and removal of some poor behaviour
 - we are future looking
 - a renewed energy and interest
 - removing the non-functioning behaviours and patterns have opened up significant issues AND if we can not engage others (we only promise and don't deliver), then we lose their confidence
 - the speakers we have had have all said "it's not business as usual" – they have shown us that we can find life
 - we have left room for the Spirit
 - we have created opportunities for intentionality AND we have missed them as well
 - we have LOST the importance of *The Manual*
- iii) What are the Presbytery Shaping Issues that we see?
- the Future of Ministry Task force because of our struggling congregations
 - congregations who say they are finding themselves "Congregationalist" and not having energy for wider church commitments
 - how do we connect with, support and empower congregations, not just the clergy and / or Presbytery rep(s)
 - How we handle Penticton – everyone is waiting and has an opinion
 - the dissonance between "what we're called to do" and everything else
 - how to re-imagine "having a minister in every pulpit and a pulpit for every minister"
 - streamlining and clarifying our policies and procedures to make them more manageable
 - how does the Executive (Leadership Circle and Management Team) enable people without becoming controlling
 - technologically connecting and shaping the Presbytery

We were discovering that the following Presbytery Shaping Issues were coming out of the conversations:

I – trust

II – discernment

III – learning to share Power & Authority

IV – What is Ministry?

V – Ecumenism

Further, what if we base each of these Presbytery Shaping Issues on “what does [one of the above topics] mean to our relationship to our Brothers and Sisters in Christ?”

LUNCH

We broke for lunch, graciously provided by Jim Hannah.

WHAT NEXT?

Karen Medland reminded the Leadership Circle that in the Spring of 2010 the Presbytery Meeting created a list of *Transformational Leadership* themes and conversations. We have been using some of these to guide our conversations at the Presbytery meetings and have had speakers for some of the topics. We are well aware that because we have had a speaker, does not mean that we are finished with that topic.

The topics that we have not yet worked with are:

Worship & Liturgy

Vision

Connecting to the Wider World

Moving Forward

Some conversation began about Worship & Liturgy and what that might mean for our Presbytery.

- Could we ask the Worship Animation Working Unit to take on a bigger focus and make sure that there is not just worship offered at Presbytery, but also some information and suggestions to take back to congregations? Something that is life-giving to our contexts?
- Is the Working Unit only a resource to Presbytery?
- How do we make sure that worship is Worship, not just performance? That there is integrity?

Once again we were reminded of Ian Fraser’s presentation at the 2010 Fall Meeting of Presbytery where he reminded the Presbytery that our work is: to have spiritual oversight of a) Pastoral Charges, b) Ministry Personnel, and c) the relationship between the two. How do we model and engage these areas of “work”?

That means that the “business of Presbytery” is not just motions and decision making, but also in the worship, the theme and the conversations that happen there.

A suggestion was made that we discern having our 2012 Spring Presbytery meeting as an “Integration Meeting” of Presbytery. A time to review the past two years of work, and time to share the learning that we have had.

There will be much “business” work to be done in the Spring, so why not focus the work in Circle Conversation and Spiritual Practice, as a way of Facing the Realities. The content will not be as important to the next meeting as the setting in context.

A suggestion was made that every topic that comes to the floor of Presbytery at the meeting be discerned through a screen:

Trust of Leadership

Relevance of Presbytery to Congregations

Affinity (how we relate to each other)

There needs to be much more work done basing our work in the Mission and Vision of Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery.

The Presbytery needs to take a moment to pause and make sure that we are still on the same page about our future. “Is where we have been where we’re supposed to be going?”

Perhaps we need to redo the work of discerning the themes of this Presbytery again.

DISCERNMENT

The Leadership Circle members will spend the next two months discerning the conversation had today, and when we next gather, will make decisions about the future paths. We acknowledged that once we have a feeling of whether the Presbytery is on the same page, the Leadership Circle would like to be creating a vision for one and a half to two years ahead, rather than four or five months.

NEXT MEETING

The Executive of Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery will meet sometime in the week of November 14th, 2011 (to be determined by a poll of the Executive Members).

The Leadership Circle of Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery will next meet on January 11th, 2012 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Winfield United Church.

ADJOURNMENT

Having reached the order of the day, we adjourned.

BLESSING

Chair, Karen Medland, offered a blessing.

Karen Medland, Chair

Graham Brownmiller, Secretary