



## Presbytery-wide Convocation

*Relationships: How can we better support one another?*

September 11, 2018

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Stillwater United Church, Stillwater, NY

Albany Presbytery Convocation in Stillwater

September 11, 2018

**“Relationships: How can we better support one another?”**

### **Co-facilitated by:**

- Elder Terry Diggory, member, Staffing Process Advisory Team (SPAT)
- Rev. Becca Lawson Putman, Co-Chair, Committee on Ministers and Congregations

**16 Participants including the co-facilitators.**

**Devotion: Psalm 133**

### **Opening Remarks:**

Terry shared the SPAT proposal for a Kononia Team.

Becca summarized major relationship issues perceived by COMAC

1. Need to be connectional. A well-networked presbytery exec can help make connections with other resources and governing bodies in the PCUSA and with partners in other denominations and faiths.
2. Newer pastors need help in getting connected. The “rule” against their serving on presbytery committees in their first year of pastoring may actually make it more difficult for them to get connected.
3. Churches in similar situations or with similar goals/missions need help in getting connected.
4. Spending time with each other outside of “doing business”—even just having fun together—is vital in building relationships.

**Questions for Small Groups:**

1. On what occasion have you experienced a blessed relationship in the life of presbytery?
2. What one thing should we do more (or newly) to experience our relationships as blessed?

**Some Key Points from Discussion:**

1. Supporting one another is everyone's responsibility. We should not let ourselves "off the hook" by limiting the responsibility to particular staff positions.
2. Those of us who have found a blessing through involvement with presbytery need to share that experience to encourage involvement by others.
3. Lift up opportunities for presbytery service by all members of congregations, not just ordained elders.
4. Individual relationships are blessed when there is empathy and a willingness to reach out and express the empathy.
5. Relationships between congregations challenge members to expand their identification beyond the walls of a particular church.
6. Varying the times and locations of presbytery gatherings increases the chances of more people participating.
7. The role of COMAC liaisons in working with congregations at times of leadership transition provides a model of blessed relationship.
8. Regulatory or punitive relations between presbytery and congregations can lead to distrust. What if presbytery were to adopt one of its own congregations as a mission?

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Diggory