



Summary of Convocation

What would a stronger presbytery look like?

June 12, 2018

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Stillwater United Church, Stillwater, NY

Albany Presbytery Convocation in Stillwater
June 12, 2018

WHAT WOULD A STRONGER PRESBYTERY LOOK LIKE?

11 participants: representing 7 congregations, plus staff, SPAT, and at-large clergy
2 were first-time coming to a SPAT event

A] Plenary reflection on selected Bible verses involving “strength.”

B] Small groups then built upon priorities they chose from the May 8 list of agreements: making suggestions for how to achieve more of what God desires.

C] Prominent among those wide-ranging suggestions were:

- 1) Develop and train a team specializing in transitional support for congregations. This team would be accountable to COMAC.
- 2) Utilize outside consultants to help churches assess their situations and develop appropriate strategies. (Some churches don't listen well to Presbytery.)
- 3) Identify where the greatest energies lie.
- 4) Facilitate sister-church relationships (not limited to PCUSA) involving shared passions, challenges, and/or geography.
- 5) Give struggling congregations permission to close. Assist that process. Honor it. Provide support to grieving members. Help them make new starts elsewhere.
- 6) Be proactive in acquainting all congregations with resources (both financial and programmatic) available through G.A., Synod, and Presbytery. (Some congregations lack well-connected leaders.)
- 7) Intentionally plant and resource new communities: worshiping and/or missional.
- 8) Offer a traveling presence – even a mobile office.
- 9) Make deliberate decisions to undertake new approaches.