

COMMITTEE ON CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND VITALITY

Report to Albany Presbytery March 26th, 2019

Since our last report to Presbytery the Committee has continued to monitor the health and vitality of the smaller congregations of our Presbytery. In Schoharie County we have seen the coming together of the Carlisle and Schoharie congregations and the closing of the Carlisle church. In addition there has been outreach with the Esperance church. In Montgomery County we have watched and encouraged the growth of the Shared Ministry between Tribes Hill Presbyterian Church and United Presbyterian Church in Amsterdam. This ministry is coming up on its first anniversary in May. In Schenectady County we continue to support the sharing of pastoral services between State Street Presbyterian Church and Christ Church of the Hills. In Washington County we continue to work with the congregations of Salem, Pultney, Putnam and Greenwich.

In addition to our work with some of our smaller congregations we are also maintaining contact with our four “new worshipping communities.” We will continue to support their work when requested.

Since the beginning of the year (and the new budget year) we have been assigned the responsibility of the New Initiative Grant Program. We inherited two grant requests that were already in process. We have awarded one grant to the Delmar, New Scotland and Rennsalaerville churches to help support the hiring of a Seminary Intern to help provide pastoral services during the summer months. The second grant request is from the Schaghticoke church. We have met with representatives from the church and are reviewing our response to their request.

We have also been in contact with several other congregations that are looking for guidance as they face uncertain futures. It is our hope to assist them in finding realistic paths forward to more stable and vital ministries in their communities.

Since inheriting the New Initiatives program we feel a need to clarify the program goals and guidelines. We hope to have these in place by summer. We continue to encourage struggling congregations to contact our committee. We are here to help in whatever way we can.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rev. Laurence C. Greenwold, Chair