

Report on GPPC's Celebrations of the Lord's Supper for Session Meeting November 21, 2017

Brief overview of the Strategic Priority and Activity (3-5 sentences)

Faith Formation and Worshipful Expression. We aim to nurture in one another an understanding of who God is, who we are, and what we, as Christians, are called to do. "The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of eating and drinking in communion with the crucified and risen Lord . . . At the Lord's Table, the Church is renewed and empowered by the memory of Christ's life, death, resurrection, and promise to return; sustained by Christ's pledge of undying love and continuing presence with God's people; and sealed in God's covenant of grace through partaking of Christ's self-offering. In remembering, believers are meant to receive and trust the love of Christ present to them and to the world, manifest the reality of the covenant of grace in reconciling and being reconciled; and proclaim the power of Christ's reign for the renewal of the world in justice and in peace." (See our *Book of Order* W-2.4000)

Main Leader(s)/Point(s) of Contact:

[REDACTED]

Key Leaders Involved:

[REDACTED]

Theology: Articulate why this priority matters in theological and practical terms. Use this formula to keep it brief -- *We are doing (output) so that (impact) happens.*

We are celebrating the Lord's Supper in a variety of ways – with trays, by intinction, at tables, in conjunction with Food Drives, and through visits to homebound members – so visitors and members of GPPC will experience eating and drinking in communion with Christ in impactful and inspiring ways.

Accountability: Identify 3-5 next steps as this priority continues, who is taking responsibility for each, and when the work is anticipated to be done.

- 1) Finalize the schedule for Communion in Worship. (Session, Nov 21)
- 2) Compile list of home-bound members who would like to receive communion. Refresh schedule of visitors and visits. ([REDACTED] December 1)
- 3) Communicate the plan for communion via the Newsletter, Carla, December 1)
- 4) Develop schedule for Supper [REDACTED] January 9)
- 5) Check with First United Presbyterian Church to see if they'd like to share Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday worship this year. (Carla, Jan 9)

Learning: What are 2-4 key learning questions that you have as you assess the effectiveness of this priority?

1. Does the celebration of Communion on first Sundays make sense to worship leaders

- and the congregation as we make our way through the Narrative Lectionary?
2. Is [REDACTED] feeling overwhelmed with Communion preparations? Does she have sufficient support? Does the schedule of trays and intinction work for her and for others?
 3. Can we find sufficient volunteers to take Communion to folks who are home-bound?
 4. Who comes to Supper? A diversity of folks? A consistent number?

Storytelling: Share one short vignette that highlights the importance of this priority.

At the last Supper, during the discussion of John 4 (Jesus and the woman at the well) we discussed the assumptions we make about people, and how Jesus reached across the divisions we often maintain. A young woman (teenaged guest to GPPC) gave an example from her school. Her dad gave an example from his work. Another guest at the table was quiet, but represented a group often marginalized. We explored the implications of the scripture in our conversation and experienced them in the gathering at the table.

**Report on GPPC's 2018 Special Offerings
for Session Meeting December 19, 2017**

Brief overview of the Strategic Priority and Activity

We aim to steward well the gifts God has given us, and in our neighborhood, city, and world, we intend to work for reconciliation and justice. Our benevolence budget includes support for a variety of organizations with whom we partner (RISC, the VICPP, CARITAS, etc.). We also provide a number of opportunities for those who worship with GPPC to support causes that advance God's work in the world. We support the four PCUSA Special offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing (Hunger Program, Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of People Program), Pentecost Offering (Children at Risk, Young Adult Volunteers), Peacemaking Offering (which we split with World Missions (mission co-worker support), and Joy Offering (racial ethnic schools, Board of Pensions programs) We conduct quarterly Food Drives for the Central Virginia Food Bank (CVFB) and receive "Change for Change" offerings that support a variety of (mostly food-justice-related international) ministries. We also receive a handful of other offerings: Garden Faire donations in the summer, which share the earth's bounty and benefit the CVFB, Christmas "Alternative Gifts," Christmas Palace Resident gifts, the Christmas Eve Pastor's Discretionary Fund offering. As needed (and as requested by the PCUSA), we also invite offerings for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Main Leader(s)/Point(s) of Contact:

[REDACTED]

Key Leaders Involved:

[REDACTED]

Theology: Articulate why this priority matters in theological and practical terms. Use this formula to keep it brief -- *We are doing (input/output) so that (impact) happens.*

(We talked about each of these offerings in turn – trying to discern the logic/theology/value behind each offering.)

Four PCUSA Special Offerings

Food Drive and Change for Change

Christmas Offerings (Alternative Gift, Palace, Pastor's Discretionary)

Garden Faire

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Accountability: Identify 3-5 next steps as this priority continues, who is taking responsibility for each, and when the work is anticipated to be done.

- 1) We will publicize the schedule of offerings (Carla)
- 2) *We will invite children's Sunday School classes to identify & promote Change for Change recipients for March 4, June 3, September 2, and December 2, and we will offer them ideas about how to do this. (I invited elders to take responsibility for these things. _____)*
- 3) *We will remind GPPC about the intent of Change for Change (mealtime remembrance) (Carla)*
- 4) We will communicate to the congregation amounts given and words of thanks we receive from agencies we've supported. (_____)
- 5)

Learning: What are 2-4 key learning questions that you have as you assess the effectiveness of this priority?

- 1) Will members of Session and the congregation, at the end of 2018, be able to say what special offerings they've supported and why?
- 2) Will giving levels in 2018 match or exceed those of 2017?
- 3) *Will children in our Sunday School classes be able to talk about the Change for Change designees they chose, and why they wanted to support those efforts?*
- 4)

Storytelling: Share one short vignette that highlights the importance of this priority.

Mati talked about the impression the grocery cart collection made on her father. He went back and told his home church about it! It's one way we're welcoming, she said.

Andy talked about how he and Sophie went shopping for gifts for someone at the Palace. Sophia was asking who the gifts were for, and they imagined that person's life and Christmas as they shopped.