**Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area**

**Some Considerations for Planning Committee Meetings**

**Why?**

The Rev. Jessica Tate and the Rev. Shavon Starling-Lewis from NEXT Church introduced us to a model of collaboration described in NEXT Church’s “Cultivated Ministry project” during our September 11, 2018 stated meeting. The Cultivated Ministry model identifies new ways to name and measure the work God is calling us to do. This model begins and ends with *theology*; it practices mutual *accountability*; members commit to constant *learning*; and at every step, we listen for the gospel through transformative *storytelling*.

We learned from the Rev. Dr. Danielle Ayana James at the January 26, 2019 stated meeting that one effective way to increase the level of engagement in a group (read: committee) is to focus on the ‘WE’ (collective) as well as the ‘ME’ (individual). Have a clear purpose for the meeting/work to be accomplished: start with the ‘WHY’. Emphasize the shared values of the members in completing the work with excellence. Collaborate on the process needed to accomplish the goal (‘HOW’). Clarify the tasks needed to achieve the goal (‘WHAT’). Support the members of the group/committee; make space for each person to share. And, finally, provide time to assess and evaluate the meeting/work.

At our May 12, 2019 stated meeting, we heard a transformative story from the Moderator of our Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) about how using some of these practices enhanced and enriched the work of that committee. For several years, CPM has included a time of intentional check in at the beginning of each meeting and a time for intentional assessment and evaluation at the end of each meeting. This practice has assisted the members to feel supported and in close community, and created a safe space for the committee to do its work, which often includes difficult and sensitive conversations. It has, in effect, increased the engagement and commitment of committee members in the work of the presbytery.

Perhaps your committee may find increased engagement, commitment and excitement for our work by using some of these practices.

The Sample Agenda here incorporates some of the principles that we learned about ~ from inside and outside our presbytery ~ in the last year. It is only a sample, an example, or guide; it is offered in the hope that you might find some helpful elements as you plan committee meetings which could lead to increased and enhanced engagement of your committee’s members. It is offered to spark your imagination and creativity as your plan your committee’s work for the upcoming year. It is not intended as a prescription or directive for how you and your committee organize your work and time together.

**Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area**

**Your Committee Name**

**Meeting Date**

**Sample Agenda**

Gathering

* Call to Order
* Identify the scribe/note taker for the meeting
* Member check-in and sharing
* Devotions/Prayer
* Approve minutes from last meeting

Committee Work Items

* Start with the “WHY” ~ the purpose
* Then ask “HOW” ~ the process
* Conclude with the “WHAT” ~ the result (“what” needs to happen/be done next and who will tackle that task; “what” resources or information or help is needed from the presbytery staff; “what” needs to be reported to presbytery)

Assessing/Measuring/Evaluating ~ perhaps ask one/more of these:

* How did we do tonight?
* Where are we using our strengths?
* What has been a surprise?
* Where are we feeling stuck?
* What are our next steps?
* What support/information do we need?

Adjourn with Prayer

**Date/Time/Place of next meeting**