

**Journey of Discovery
Report to the Regional Board
October 20-21, 2006**

Background: Journey of Discovery is a congregational transformation program developed by the Center for Parish Development. In 2005, the Northwest Regional Christian Church entered into a partnership with four Presbyteries in Washington and Montana to share costs as we offer this program to our congregations. A major part of the program is the use of trained consultants to work one on one with the participating congregations. Most of 2005 was spent training the consultants and developing interest and commitment among our congregations. We currently have 6 trained consultants in the Northwest Region. They are: Tabitha Anderson (Yakima), Sally Smith (Prosser), Don Carlson (Olympia), Bill and Connie Robey (Sumner) and Sandy Messick (Edmonds). In January of 2006, we launched the Journey of Discovery with nine churches participating from the Northwest Region. They are: First Christian Churches in Bellingham, Bremerton, Tacoma, and Puyallup, Edmonds Christian, North Hill and Opportunity Christian in Spokane, and Englewood and United Christian Churches in Yakima.

Current Status: The 9 churches are currently working with their consultants through Phase 2 of the 5 Phase program. This phase focuses on creating a common view of reality around the current state of the congregation while beginning to identify and grapple with the unique challenges and opportunities each congregation faces. Sitting as bookmarks on either end of this phase are two congregational conferences. The first, which most churches have now completed, is a Conference on the Past that seeks to lift up moments in the church's history that were especially significant and that helped to form who they are as a congregation today. The second is a Conference on the Present that will identify the most significant challenges that the congregation must address in order to move forward as God's church in this time. Most congregations will hold this conference in either late 2006 or early 2007. Each congregation is moving at its own pace through the process and each is meeting with its own successes and difficulties. The consultants are meeting regularly with their churches to offer support, training, and direction.

Oversight: With the departure of Associate Regional Minister Charlotte Hoppe in early 2006, there was a need for continued accountable oversight and guidance for the Journey of Discovery program. The Regional Board voted to call two interim, part-time co-coordinators to direct our efforts in congregational transformation as it relates to Journey of Discovery and to be the contact persons for our churches, the four Presbyteries, and the Center for Parish Development. Part of the co-coordinators' role has been to present the Journey material in gatherings on the West side of the state. (Ray Schulte, Center for Parish Development, has presented material to eastside gatherings) To date, we have led a gathering for Westside clergy and a training session for leadership teams from participating congregations. We also convened and led an additional training session for our consultants around the Organizational Analysis, a significant piece of Phase 2 that is led by the consultants. The co-coordinators also are responsible for managing and approving Journey of Discovery related expenditures from that portion of the Regional budget set aside for congregational transformation.

Future Dates: In November, the nine consultants will receive additional training on Phase 2 and begin working towards Phase 3. We will be meeting in Spokane, Nov. 7-8. On Nov. 8 there will be a gathering for all eastside clergy at Millwood Presbyterian Church in

Spokane. The clergy gathering will be replicated on the Westside by the co-coordinators on Nov. 14 at First Christian, Tacoma. Phase 3 will be launched in early 2007 with training for leadership teams on Jan. 27 (eastside) and Feb. 10 (Westside).

Questions about the program may be addressed to either of us. Contact information is listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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