

Foothills Presbytery Discernment Task Force

May 31, 2014

Discerning where God is leading us in the 21st century

Friends in Christ,

In gratitude to God for the rich gifts of the living heritage of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the Upstate of South Carolina, the Foothills Presbytery Discernment Task Force began its work with a clear focus on the question: Who is God calling us to be and what is God calling us to do together to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Turning to scripture and the gifts of our Reformed heritage the Discernment Task Force first asked:

What must we do together to faithfully live out our Presbyterian Identity?

Six months of prayer, thought, study and conversation have led us to consider a Constitutionally defined model for the essential administration of Foothills Presbytery and the basic budget to meet these “musts”. The attached “Constitutionally Defined Table of Leadership” and proposed budget map out a structure that we believe is faithful to our heritage and apt for this new time. The Discernment Task Force invites the members of Presbytery to reflect on this model. In the coming months we will create opportunities for what we hope will be a broad and deep conversation about identity and our shared future.

As we have discussed these “constitutional musts,” we believe are foundational in our work and identity as Presbyterians. We are also very aware of the questions and issues surrounding the question: “What is our shared mission in the 61 churches of Foothills Presbytery?” As we move towards a consensus about the appropriate administrative structure we also invite you to prayerfully reflect and discuss and respond to this question:

What do we need to do together than we cannot do separately?

The final page of this report provides this question with a word cloud of mission and ministry works to consider.

Peace,

FH Discernment Task Force

Ruling Elders: Dr. Lin Dearing (Fort Hill), Mr. Ike Johnson (Mattoon), Dr. Robert McCormick (Nazareth), Mrs. Susan Tompkins (First, Greer)

Teaching Elders: Rev. David Bailey (Central), Rev. Christi Brown (First, Spartanburg), Rev. Lindsay Hatch (Mt. Zion), Rev. Lud Weaver (Westminster, Greenville)

Presbytery Staff (ex officio): Rev. Gordon W. G. Raynal, Rev. Debbie Foster, Mrs. Leanne White