

## **Congregational Development Small Town and Rural Context**

Rt. Rev. Sir and Delegates:

Allow me to begin this report exactly as I did last year and as I will next year by listing the members of the Committee. They are: Cathy Cox, Cheryl Moon, William Fasel, Harold Kost, Mickey Simnett, Channing Horner, Douglas Johnson, Dave Williams, Vicki Hanna, Anne Kyle, Christine Gilson, William McVey and Marty Byer. I list the Committee members first because of the extraordinary work they have done throughout the four years I have chaired the Committee.

One of the programs of which the Committee and I are most proud is the Visioning Workshop developed under the direction of The Rev. Virginia Brown. This workshop focuses exclusively on a congregations' strengths and gifts rather than upon shortcomings and problems. The workshop takes four hours and is best conducted on a Saturday. I invite congregations to inquire further about having a Visioning Workshop by calling me at 417.505.0702 or by sending an email to [michaelrkyle@aol.com](mailto:michaelrkyle@aol.com).

Recently the Committee has been able to offer another program through the generosity of the people of Calvary Church, Sedalia and its rector, The Rev. A. William McVey. Calvary is a congregation with strong presence of those gifted in music and other art forms. Last summer the congregation held a Christian art camp rather than a vacation Bible school. Calvary expected 10 participants. When the doors opened, 60 children walked through.

The Rev. McVey believes this experience can be replicated in other congregations. To that end he invited the Committee to consider a plan for enabling this to occur. At its last meeting, the Committee adopted the following possibilities:

- Churches could send people to Calvary a day in advance of art camp for orientation. The visitors would then observe the 2 days of the camp and attend a reflection with the staff at the conclusion of the camp.

- Churches could invite the Calvary team to their sites. The Calvary team would then direct the camp. There would also be the opportunity for congregations to brainstorm and plan their own expressions of the camp.

The suggestion was also made for workshops to be presented in conjunction with the Formation Committee. One workshop would be given entirely over to the art camp. Another workshop could include the art camp

as an offering among others. The Committee realizes in order to fully implement plans, fund will need to be made available for travel, housing and meals.

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Another aspect of the work of the Committee is to encourage new ministries of outreach and membership development. This past summer nine grants were awarded to constituent congregations:

-Church of the Transfiguration, Mountain Grove

Assistance in the purchase of a projector to use for film evening outreach program.

-St. Luke's, Excelsior Springs

Assistance with signage & publicity for the promotion for an ecology camp program.

-Trinity, Marshall

Purchase of a hymn-playing device to provide musical accompaniment for congregational singing during worship.

-St. Nicholas, Noel

Funding for an outreach project for adult ESOL programs and children's schoolwork assistance program.

-St. John's, Neosho

Assistance in providing a musician for Sunday worship and for the purchase of a copier.

-St. Matthew's, Ozark

Funding assistance for food supplies and advertising for the mission's weekly community meal.

-Calvary, Sedalia

Funding assistance for a Christian art camp for children and "Seeker: Art & Media Program"

-St. Mary's, Fayette

Funding for furniture and an area rug to provide a more comfortable setting for the campus ministry program offered to students of Central Methodist University.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Michael R. Kyle, Chair

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