



MISSION DESIGN TEAM MAKES INTERIM REPORT TO SYNOD COUNCIL

Representing the team that is coordinating the evaluation of the Synod's mission design and structure, the Rev. Paul LaMontagne reported to the Synod Council on April 18, 2009, regarding the status of the discernment process. He reported that two consultations had been held, with presbyteries widely represented in October, and with a smaller group of people representing Synod entities that also sought to be inclusive of presbyteries in March. Consultations with five Presbytery Councils have also been held to date. A radical restructuring of the Synod appears to be neither needed nor desired, he reported. Although an understanding of the work of Presbytery Partnership Groups (PPG) is not necessarily well known or understood at the presbytery level, there is consensus that the PPGs are becoming increasingly effective regional agents of the Synod's mission and that any difficulties experienced at the PPG level have been inherent in the start-up process of establishing operating norms and procedures.

The growing consensus that emerged from the March consultation is that the Synod's primary roles should be 1) to energize presbyteries in building the Kingdom of God, making a difference in the world; 2) developing leaders in Christ's service across the Synod; and 3) practicing effective stewardship in discerning gifts and the best use of resources. Improved communication, accountability, and the identification and use of expertise, are mechanisms identified to enhance and sustain the mission goals.

The design team divided its mid-

discernment report into two segments: recommendations related to the 2010 budget, and recommendations for the 2011-14 discernment cycle.

The consultation identified budget areas where reductions would be recommended for 2010 in order to off-set an anticipated reduction in mission contributions from presbyteries. Specifically named were a) the Synod's demographic data contract; b) financial support for state councils of churches; and c) financial support for Interim Min-



istry Training. Additionally, the development is being revisited and the Synod's Faithful Servant Initiative (though reserves have been committed for church development, transformation, leadership development and immigrant ministry NCD bridge funding) ends in 2010; a plan for church development funding will need to be addressed over the next eighteen months.

Although most matters in the report were referred, the Synod Council took one specific action in response to the report, namely indicating that if PPG block grants needed to be reduced in 2010 due to a fall-off in mission receipts from the presbyteries, the accumulated amount available for block grants will continue to be allocated through 2010 honoring the proportionally among the partnership groups that was originally established.

The Design Team's mid-discernment proposal for the four years beginning 2011 was more general than its recommendations for 2010, proposing that:

- 1) the basic Synod structure of partnership groups be affirmed and continued in the new cycle;
- 2) that the Design Team continue its work through 2010 on the presumption that structural changes will mostly likely be minor in nature;
- 3) that the Design Team work towards reporting to the October 2010 Synod Assembly any further changes in Synod mission and structure that appears to be wise. Furthermore, the Design Team will bring a report in 2009 to the Synod Assembly, by which some specific recommendations can be made and either affirmed or sent back for reconsideration.

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Proposed Focus of Synod Mission Design 2011-14		Communication	Accountability	Expertise
 Mobilizing Presbyteries to Build the Kingdom of God, Making a Difference in the World.	 Developing Leaders in Christ's Service Across the Synod.			
Practicing Effective Stewardship: discerning gifts & best use of resources				

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WESTERN NEW YORK PRESBYTERY APPROVES RESOLUTION SUPPORTING NUCLEAR WASTE CLEANUP AT WEST VALLEY

At its March 28th meeting, the [Western New York Presbytery](#) voted unanimously to endorse the complete excavation of nuclear waste at the West Valley Demonstration Project, located in Cattaraugus and southern Erie counties.

The presbytery supports the full clean up of the entire West Valley site, known in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as the "Sitewide Removal Alternative." Upon a recommendation from the Synod's Public Policy Advocacy Network (PPAN) Synod Council moved to support the presbytery in

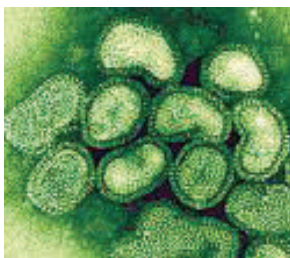


its resolution, and to forward the resolution to presbyteries in the Synod, encouraging them to act in support of Western New York by the June 8th deadline. [Click here](#) to read the press release from the presbytery.

[Click here](#) to read the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Decommissioning the West Valley Demonstration Project & Western New York Nuclear Service Center. A history of the site is available at [New York State Energy Research and Development Authority \(NYSERDA\)](#).

H1N1 INFLUENZA (SWINE FLU): HOW PRESBYTERIES & CONGREGATIONS CAN LEAD IN ITS MITIGATION

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that an increasing number of cases of H1N1 Influenza (swine flu) are being identified in the United States and as of April 29th there had been one death. On April 30th Fort Worth, Texas closed its schools. The CDC reports that investigations are ongoing to monitor the rate of infections and determine its source



Church sessions should post helpful flu-related information in public places in churches, such as bathrooms and hallways, and distribute

information by email to members and friends of the church to encourage healthy practices

recommended by the CDC. Following are every day actions people can take to maintain their own and the public's health:

- **Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are effective.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.**
- **Try to avoid close contact with sick people because influenza is air-borne, thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.**
- **If you get sick, CDC recommends that except for seeing a doctor, you should stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from**

infecting them. (This applies to pastors as much as to anyone.)

CDC, working closely with officials in states where human cases of swine flu have been identified, as well as working with health officials in Mexico, Canada and the World Health Organization, is deploying staff to provide guidance and technical support and has activated its Emergency Operations Center to coordinate efforts.

CDC also has prepared interim guidance on how to care for people who are sick and on the use of face masks in a community setting where spread of this swine flu virus has been detected. This is a rapidly evolving situation and CDC will provide new information as it becomes available.

www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm

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Some of the interests and concerns the team hopes to address in the months ahead are: 1) the formula for distribution of block grants to PPGs in 2011-2014; 2) the development of a pool of resources and expertise for PPGs and presbyteries; 3) a study of the procedures and structures put in place by PPGs to facilitate decision making and mission; 4) the development of an accountability group to work with staff to review PPG action and to provide PPGs with guidance; 5) other items that surface through conversations with presbytery councils over the next six months.

Clint McCoy
Executive for Partnerships

MULTIPLY YOUR GENEROSITY THROUGH A MATCHING DONATION FROM YOUR EMPLOYER

Dollar-for-dollar, some employers are willing to match donations made by their employ-



ees to not-for-profit organizations including church-related organizations, such as schools and community ministries.

To discover whether your company will match your

donations and under what circumstances, contact your human resources department or an internet search that includes the name of your company and the phrase "matching donations."

PC(USA) MADAGASCAR NETWORK MEETING

Elders Lida Dawson Price and Barbara Epley-Shuck represented the Synod at the first Madagascar Network meeting in Orlando, Florida on April 30, 2009. Also in attendance was Rev. Lala Rasendrasina, his wife Zoe and son Fita who sought safety in the United States after a recent coup in Madagascar. Rev. Rasendrasina is the President of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM).