

November 11, 2021



Greetings Partners in Ministry,

I want to share a few updates from different parts of the life of our presbytery...

### ***Retreat***

In the winters that preceded this pandemic we offered a retreat away at the beach in Ocean City for church leaders around the presbytery. For good reason, we put it on hold last year. Having a year away has given us some time and space to rethink a whole new shape this retreat will take on in the years to come. We not only want to offer time for relaxation and renewal but for our leaders to walk away with practical pieces that are going to strengthen their ministries. In the pages of this post, you will see a “save the date”. So, mark your calendars and keep your eyes peeled for more information to come.

### ***Worship and Theology***

Traditionally, our Worship and Theology team has been responsible for planning the worship services that are part of our presbytery meetings. Starting in 2022 the team will be expanding the work they do in service to all of you. For many church leaders who are involved in the week-to-week planning of worship it is often hard to find time to participate in worship. Our team wants to help change that. The hope is to offer worship services throughout the year, not tied to a Tuesday night presbytery meeting, to allow leaders time to participate in worship and to experience worship in new ways.

### ***COLA***

Each year, usually late in the summer, Committee on Ministry (COM) puts together all the requirements and recommendations about pastor compensation. As part of that process, they put forward a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) as a guideline to help churches plan for their upcoming budgets. Since late summer, the Consumer Price Index, which is where we gather our data, has had a significant increase. Our formula will not see this increase until next year. This means there might be a very steep figure moving forward for 2023. To better prepare for that potential increase, and to have a more real time figure for 2022, we are encouraging churches to go above and beyond the 1.5% increase. COM will also be reexamining how we calculate this figure going forward and will keep you informed along the way.

### ***Healthy Boundaries***

Like all things during this pandemic, finding a way to fully translate something we did in person to a completely digital experience has been a constant challenge. The Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinating Team has been trying to find a way to fulfill our requirement for a “Healthy Boundaries” training. The team has chosen to use a completely digital package that can be done on demand, which means a time and place that is most agreeable to the user’s schedule. We offer an opportunity to complete the training during the remainder of this year as well as using the same platform for 2022. Please be on the lookout for registration information.

### ***Sunday, December 26<sup>th</sup>***

Christmas is coming early! Well, sort of. Your presbytery staff will provide another downloadable service for the Sunday after Christmas to give all our congregational leaders a well-deserved Sunday off.

*John*

