

Charge Conference Suggestions for 2018

Behold! Report from Pastor and Congregation

The primary emphasis of this report is encouraging our congregations to utilize their structure and ministry plans to their best interest and support. The hope is that as congregations dream and seek to behold God's work among and through them that they will also look at how their structure supports the vision and ministry God has given to them.

To assist this, we drew attention the NOW structure, hoping that our churches might take advantage of a more consolidated structure or might at least tailor the structure to cover the areas of Nurture, Outreach, and Witness as creatively and intentionally as possible. We hope that the Behold! Report will serve as a conversation starter for church councils to look at their needs. We hope that our congregations may take advantage of the opportunity to re-structure their council agendas so that Nurture, Outreach, and Witness serve as primary lenses rather than after-thoughts.

During the charge conference itself, we discussed some of the following possibilities:

- 1) Keep before the congregations the theme of anticipation and expectation. To behold is to be aware, to notice, to tend to God's presence and activity. Encourage through your devotion, your leadership, and your discussion the premise that a living God is still before us and inviting us into God's work in the world.
- 2) Model what it means to see through the lenses of Nurture, Outreach, and Witness. Brenda Carroll has developed a sample agenda for Church Councils utilizing this structure and would be willing to share this information. Help them know the kinds of questions and concerns that move to the front of the agenda when NOW is our focus.
- 3) Invite the churches to tell stories that reflect the experience of God through Nurture, Outreach, and Witness. How have they been able to behold God's mercy and grace through Nurture, Outreach, and Witness?
- 4) If in clusters, invite them to learn from each other about how they have structured to address these ministry areas. What helps to strengthen their ministries in each of these areas? What have they discovered that others might find helpful?
- 5) The goal of this year's form and reporting is to help our congregations do more than go through the motions. How we live our faith, how we implement our visions, how we prioritize our time—all of these are gateways to behold God's presence and be transformed and in turn to transform the world through our faith in Jesus Christ. Let's Behold! presence together!