

BEHOLD!**Report of Pastor and Congregation****Behold, I stand at the door and knock ~ Revelation 3:20****Behold, I will do a new thing ~ Isaiah 43:19****Behold, I make all things new ~ Revelation 21:5****Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go ~ Genesis 28:15**

Behold! What wonderful hope comes with these promises of Scripture! A living God who seeks to be in relationship with humanity, who continues to work in new and creative ways, who restores and brings new life, and who accompanies us throughout our journeys. **Behold**, Church, God is calling us forward into the future. Our task is to live as those who behold God's presence within the lives of our congregations (Nurture), to share the mercy and grace we receive with the world God loves (Outreach), and to invite others to join us in this mission so that they too might behold and experience God's love for themselves (Witness).

As your congregation prepares for Charge Conference, you have the opportunity to reflect and to plan. You have the responsibility of naming persons for leadership, of determining your next steps in ministry, and of evaluating how you best fulfill the responsibilities for ministry in your congregation. Every congregation has administrative responsibilities they accomplish through the church council, the pastor-parish relations committee, the finance committee, the trustees, and the nominations committee.

In addition, each congregation has the responsibility to address the areas of Nurture, Outreach, and Witness. The congregation has the freedom to structure their ministries and their leadership to best reflect their gifts and ministry plans. Nurture, Outreach, and Witness ministries may be coordinated by individual chairpersons for each of these three areas. These chairpersons may have a team of persons that they lead. Congregations may have additional persons who address specific areas of ministry that they desire to support such as age-level ministries, or worship, or local missions. *The 2016 Book of Discipline* in paragraph 252.2 (pages 182-183) provides the list of ministries that are covered under each area of Nurture, Outreach, and Witness. As you prepare for Charge Conference, please review this paragraph and your congregation's ministry plans and determine how you will address these ministry areas, either with specific leadership or with leadership positions that combine several of these areas of ministry.

Your discernment of the leadership needed for your congregation's ministries will be reflected in the positions that are nominated on pages 6-8 of *Officers, Leaders, and Employed Staff* listed on Form 3. In addition, you are asked to prepare for your Charge Conference a complete listing of leadership for your local church, including any positions that are beyond what is recorded on Form 3. You are encouraged to start early in your preparations so that you can identify your ministry plans and then nominate leadership to support them. Remember, your goal is to *behold* God's presence as you plan for Nurture, Outreach, and Witness ministries in and through your congregation.

To assist you with this process, consider the following questions:

As you plan for ministry in the coming year, how will you **nurture** into faith in Jesus Christ persons who have been received into the care of your congregation?

As you plan for ministry in the coming year, what is your next step of **outreach** to a world hungry for the grace and love of Jesus Christ?

As you plan for ministry in the coming year, how will you **witness** to others and invite and welcome them to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ?

As you respond to these questions, please identify what parts of your congregation's structures help you accomplish these ministry plans and what leadership positions you will need to meet these plans.

In your discussion and preparation, consider how you might live as a congregation shaped by anticipation and expectation of God's love and grace being made known in and through you! What will help you behold God's amazing and transforming love?