

Business as [un]Usual

Notes from the Stated Clerk Barbara Lutter about the business of the presbytery during such an unusual time as this.

As summer winds down, I am looking toward the autumn months, anticipating how differently we will approach our usual work during the coming season. Here's a preview:

- Annual Review of Session Minutes: we will not meet in person, in different churches, to accomplish this work. Instead, I will be asking each clerk of session to complete a 2020 Session Minutes Self-Review, and submit it to me at the PTCA office. I will then provide each clerk of session with the requisite "minutes approval" sticker, to be affixed in the Minutes Book. The 2020 Checklist will be posted on the presbytery web page within a few weeks and it will be distributed to each clerk of session.
- Statistics Season is just around the corner. No doubt about it, this year's statistical reports may be a bit of a challenge. For example, how do we determine the average number attending remote worship? Well, we do the best we can to estimate, based on the data available to us, which will vary from church to church. And that's ok!! As always, I am available and willing to work with each church, clerk of session and moderator to make sure the statistical reports are submitted on time, as easily possible.
- Revising our presbytery's important documents and procedures. It has been a number of years since we adopted our Manual of Operations and Bylaws. Now, two events (the implementation of our new presbytery committee structure and the COVID-19 pandemic) require us to review these documents and update them to match the demands and circumstances of this time. Be assured, the proposed revisions will be published and circulated for comments and suggestions ~ my hope is this will happen in early 2021.

These are just a few examples of the "normal" work that we are approaching in new ways, with changing expectations and changing processes/procedures. For those of us, like me, who find comfort in "routine," these can be unsettling times. There are, however, opportunities inherent in these unusual times ~

opportunities for reformation. I imagine that our predecessors had similar feelings as computers and cell phones replaced the typewriter and adding machine in our church offices. I remind myself often, that it is a blessing to have the opportunity to look at our presbytery's procedures and practices through the lens of COVID-19 Time, and to reform the way we approach our work in relevant ways.