

THE PMA MULTIPLIER

PMA3 e-NEWSLETTER – EDITION 3 – JANUARY 2020

MISSIONAL FOCUS: DISCIPLESHIP

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." ESV

For as long as I have been part of the EPC and particularly, of the Mid-Atlantic Presbytery, the Great Commission has been at the forefront. Howard Shockley, our beloved late Administrative Director and Stated Clerk, often signed off with, "It's about the Great Commission." And the heart of the Great Commission is "make disciples."

It is easy to make that a mantra—it is much more difficult to make it a reality. Discipleship is not a program of the church; it is not a class we can simply teach and expect everyone to thereby "be discipled." Discipleship is an encounter and submission to the Lord of the Church in daily surrender of our rights to ourselves. And discipleship is THE reason the Church exists in the world today. To make disciples is to introduce people to Christ, baptize them, and teach them "to observe all that I have commanded..." Everything the church does needs to produce disciples.

Because this is so important, at this next presbytery meeting our Church Development Committee has orchestrated three different presenters to call us to this task. For the first time we will be meeting within our three regions to hear presenters from our regions and to engage one another in the Great Commission. Our prayer is that this time together will stir our spirits to follow our Lord's call and commission to His Church. It's still about the Great Commission.

Bill Enns – PMA3 Multiplication Team Leader

PMA MISSION

The mission of the EPC Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic is to resource, train and encourage one another to fulfill the Great Commission.

THE PMA's GOT TALENT!

During Order of the Day/Missional Focus at our September 2019 Stated Meeting, the Resource Committee prompted our gathering for the first time as three proposed presbyteries so that we might begin to establish three distinct identities and get a look at who else will be among our newly developing tribes. The activity was centered around the theme *The PMA's Got Talent!* Every one of us, REs and TEs, brings something of value to the table, perhaps knowledge or skill or experience or a best practice or two. The inventory of talent among us is huge and, until now, has gone largely untapped. That's changing and it's changing now.

The assignment in September was to identify the various topics that were of particular interest to our people and, then, to identify potential presenters from among our ranks who might address those topics during Orders of the Day. The response was overwhelming as hundreds of forms were submitted.

Michelle Munger from our Resource Committee took on the task of organizing all the data across a spreadsheet that identified preferred topics, curated into twenty-three categories, as well as dozens of potential presenters who were linked to their respective proposed presbyteries. This data will be the worksheet for selecting topics and presenters for Orders of the Day/Missional Focus for 2020 and 2021, and will be a valuable resource for each of our new presbyteries when we ultimately multiply into three in 2022.

Future Stated Meetings 2020:

94th January 24-25; Darlington EPC

95th April 24-25; River Oaks EPC

96th September 25-26; Lake Forest EPC

HOT TOPIC! DISCIPLESHIP

Twenty-three topic categories emerged from the PMA's Got Talent survey in September and the top two topics were Discipleship and Generations followed at a distance by other top vote-getters including Evangelism, Leadership, Elders & Deacons, Missions, Outreach and Prayer. Given the clear call for equipping in Discipleship, the Executive Council has named Discipleship as a primary initiative during the remaining two years of our joint journey from one to three.

A particular genre of Discipleship will be in the spotlight. With Discipleship carrying so many different definitions and interpretations, a clear approach will be named and pursued. That approach will be Missional Discipleship, a brand of Discipleship that emphasizes the going and making of disciples who go and make disciples. The first installment will be offered this month at our stated meeting in Darlington, SC.

From the Road . . .



Word for 2020: Alignment

As we look at 2019 in the rearview mirror, we can see that it was a pivotal year for the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic (PMA), starting last January with a historic vote to plant three new EPC presbyteries out of our one PMA by a margin of nearly 93%. Even by our current cultural landscape that would be considered a mandate.

A profound moment in that January meeting happened when Teaching Elder (TE) Matt Walton challenged us with the words that a vote for Multiplication is a commitment to sacrifice. Planting three presbyteries

from our one means our worshipping communities must faithfully pledge the necessary resources of time, people and financial giving well beyond our Per Member Askings to make this happen. Matt clearly articulated that for the two years this metamorphous of mission will take to unfold, it is going to be a call for all hands on deck, and went as far as to say that if any worshipping community was unwilling to commit fully to the sacrifice, it should vote NO.

So, with this prayerfully received vision from the Lord, the PMA moved forward to ALIGN our desires and actions to God's mission to plant three distinct Missional Regions with the one common purpose: To Raise Up Disciple Making, Disciple Church Planting Churches. Our Multiplication Team has worked with the existing committees to trifurcate themselves. No easy feat! But, in the process we have found that the PMA is truly blessed with godly men and women who are willing to commit time, natural talents and spiritual gifts to lead us in our mission.

The Executive Council committed our 2020 Presbytery Resource times to personal and corporate discipleship and tasked the Church Development Committee (CDC) with using this time to create connection between the worshipping communities in each of the Missional Regions and to using the gifted folks within those regions to teach biblical discipleship. We are fully committed to prepare each of our 129 (and growing) worshipping communities to capture the vision that all those who worship are called to leverage our spheres of influence to share the gospel in words and kind, loving actions with any and all we meet. Some of our communities within each of the regions have already made great inroads into this and have much to offer the rest of us who are at various points along the spectrum.

We fully expect 2020 to be fraught with both great challenges and great achievements. But we rest in the knowledge of the assurance that when we align our hearts with God's desires, and commit our actions to his work, we will see the blessing of transformed lives by the power of His Holy Spirit.

*Your Friend and Brother, In Him,
Bucky Hunsicker, Missional Executive Director*

PS: If you are one of the 30ish worshipping communities I have yet to visit, don't give up on me. I am still on the road and working my way to yours. RE Tim Burns, our PMA Treasurer, is still keeping the tank full of gas for me as I meander the various roads and byways of the PMA.