

Missional Renewal Commission Report
Southern OH/KY District Board Meeting
September 11, 2021

Missional Renewal did not meet in August or September.

- In our Report to the Board on July 10, 2021, Missional Renewal attached “Questions for Considering the New Normal”. (Page 2 of this report). These questions are for the purpose of helping leadership and congregations in discerning next steps moving forward into a post-pandemic context.
 - We listed three actions to be carried out.
 - ❖ Of the three intended actions:
 - Dave Shetler has included the “Questions for Considering the New Normal” in his weekly email to district leadership and has invited congregations to contact Missional Renewal if they would like our assistance in processing these questions as they seek to move forward.
 - We have not posted the questions to the district website.
 - We have not sent out a separate email calling attention to “Questions for Considering the New Normal” with the accompanying invitation to contact.
 - So far, Missional Renewal has not received any requests for assistance related to “Questions for Considering the New Normal.”
 - Part of our ongoing discussion related to this initiative will involve recognition of the fact that, since our July meeting, much has changed related to the COVID pandemic. Consequently, we are not yet in a post-pandemic time.
 - The questions remain applicable, but the perception of many congregations may be that looking ahead is a bit difficult right now.
-

The Racial Justice Task Team met on August 11 and September 7, 2021 via Zoom.

- The Team hosted Racial Justice Zoom Events on July 27 and August 31, 2021.
 - Each event involved a team member sharing their story/experiences related to race.
7/27 – Kirstin Harvey
8/31 – Victor Thomas
- Zoom events centered around team members sharing their story are scheduled for the last Tuesday in September and October.
- The team is sponsoring a Racial Justice Workshop on Friday of District Conference 2021.
 - The presenter for this workshop is Bruce Rosenberger.
 - The workshop is titled “Who is My Neighbor: Race in the Bible and in the Neighborhood.”
- Members of the Racial Justice Team will also be part of the Friday afternoon panel discussion at 2021 District Conference.

Submitted by Mike Yingst on behalf of the Missional Renewal Commission.

Questions for Considering the New Normal

The concept that the Holy Spirit walks beside us presupposes that we are:

- *moving*.
- listening for the Voice of God
- aware of the work of the Holy Spirit
- attentive to what God would have us be about in the name of Jesus.

The pandemic and all the concerns around it have taken up much of our energy and time in the past year – but now what? It is time to ask what God would have us be about in the coming new normal.

Our real questions surround our mission:

What is our mission as we move forward?

What are the whispers of the Holy in our churches today?

What is it that God wants us to pay attention to in our community?

How can our eyes be opened to God's purposes for what is next?

The pandemic says – close your eyes...you have enough to think about with all that is going on... – God says “open your eyes for what is next and listen to the Holy Spirit.” In John 16:13 we read: ¹³ *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.* Declaring truth and speaking only what God tells the Spirit to speak – and importantly – declare to you the things that are to come.

How do we experience the Holy Spirit? Are we listening?

How are we cultivating the time, space, and attention to the Holy Spirit that is needed to listen for the urgings of God?

What is the Spirit doing in our lives as followers of Jesus?