

Connectional Tissue

“As it is, there are many members, yet one body.” (1 Corinthians 12:20, NRSV)

Paul uses the familiar imagery of the body to describe both the diversity and unity which are bound together to form the body of Christ in the world. In verse 21 of this passage from his first letter to the church in Corinth, Paul states that neither the eye nor the head can say to the foot that I have no need of you. All parts are needed. All parts are important. All parts are interdependent.

So what does all this “body talk” have to do with your per capita and basic mission giving? It describes the connectional tissue that uniquely binds together 21,750 members and 66 congregations who are the portion of the body known as the Presbytery of Whitewater Valley.

The mission of your Presbytery is to “partner with congregations as we grow into God’s future.” Two of the important ways through which the connectional tissue sustains and weaves the many partnerships and grows together are the per capita and the basic mission resources received annually by the Presbytery from members and congregations. These resources are then redistributed back to the body and out into the world as a witness to the good news of the gospel.

Reflecting diversity while maintaining unity, congregations may either request of their members to voluntarily contribute or make per capita and basic mission part of their annual budget. Neither is right or wrong, only different and it reflects the unique culture and identity of each congregation.

What does per capita support? It sustains the skeleton of your Presbytery’s activities through office space, copiers, and supplies that are used at the Presbytery office by many teams and committees who meet regularly. It supports the tendons, ligaments, and muscles of administrative ministries that provide pastoral care to congregations and ministers during times of transition. It provides the administrative support to individuals and congregations who have needs related to coordination and communication of ministry opportunities, the evaluation and implementation of financial systems, and the creative resources for web design, to name a few. Per capita also nourishes the skin that binds the activities of your Presbytery together in relationship with congregations, Synods and the General Assembly.

What does basic mission support? It is the heart of ministry in, among, and through the body of your Presbytery, our expression of the compassion of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ to the world. It sustains partnerships with Pyoca Camp & Conference Center, Westminster Neighborhood Ministries, Congo Helping Hands, Hispanic Ministries, Northern Quintana Roo and the Congregational Resource Center at the Christian Theological Seminary. It provides funding for local, regional, national, and international missions and supports educators, doctors, dentists, nurses, youth workers, evangelists, and missionaries around the world. Basic mission is the heart of the gospel at work in new church development, hosting of special events/training, and the nurturing of our congregations.

Together, per capita and basic mission resources are the wellspring of abundance, the life blood that sustains all of us as connectional tissue. Yes, we the body – connected in faith, connectional by design, interdependent through the love of God and one another, partnering and growing in ministry and service together.

