

## JOY AND HOPE AT WORK

As each calendar year begins, a Presbyterian's fancy turns to...per capita? Individually, \$33.70 may not seem like much but John Knox Presbytery is a community of communities. When all the contributions are added together, remarkable things happen. Every time we work together, we accomplish more.

A portion of each per capita contribution supports the work of our committees. This month, we are highlighting the Committee on Ministry, a group of teaching elders and ruling elders from around the Presbytery. Through the gift of your per capita dollars, committee members are able come together to plan their work and go out to serve congregations. And serve they do! The Committee on Ministry supports teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders in their call at the same time they are developing relationships with congregations.

When you think of the Committee on Ministry, think of the words "conversation" and "listening". Whether it's guiding a congregation seeking new pastoral leadership, meeting with the pastor and the Session for a triennial visit, connecting pastors who are new to our Presbytery with a welcoming pastor, maintaining the pulpit supply list or checking in with retired pastors and their spouses, the Committee on Ministry not only engages folks in conversation but also spends time listening to what people say. At times the situations are difficult but members of the Committee on Ministry do not avoid such times. Instead, they facilitate the interchange of ideas and work to achieve the reconciliation that lies ahead.

When the Generosity Task Force spoke to the co-chairs of the Committee on Ministry (teaching elders Stacy Cavanaugh and Jim Scaife), they used two words you might not immediately associate with the work of the committee—**joy** and **hope**. They said it's **joyful** to develop relationships with churches and to see people living out their faith. It's **joyful** to see congregations designing new pastoral leadership models. It's **joyful** to feel the Holy Spirit guiding conversations. And it's **joyful** to approach a difficulty in a congregation and to find ways to work together to address it.

**Hope** can also be found in much of what the committee does. There is **hope** in noticing trends in ministry and sharing this knowledge. In doing so, the Committee on Ministry brings **hope** to congregations who are looking for a new model for pastoral leadership. **Hope** also comes out of triennial visits. Our churches are making an impact on their communities. **Hope** has even been evident in the swift changes that congregations have made during the pandemic and the ways people have managed to stay connected.

The workload of the Committee on Ministry is great but, instead of choosing other words, Stacy and Jim picked "**joy**" and "**hope**". As a community of communities, we are in debt to the members of the Committee on Ministry—for developing relationships, for keeping us connected and for proclaiming **hope** as we continue to navigate a global pandemic. We can all feel good about the per capita dollars our congregations send to John Knox Presbytery. That's what a community of communities does. We support one another as the **hope** we feel keeps growing.

--God accepts what we offer and makes it amazing—  
The Generosity Task Force