

Brothers and sisters in ministry,

We are again approaching the time both to look back on and look forward to the ministry of La Verne Heights Presbyterian Church. As we enter into that process together, the Session would first like to extend true and deep gratitude to all of you who have responded to God's call to labor in the harvest work of the kingdom of God (Matthew 9:35-38). Each Ministry Group, and each one working within each Ministry Group, is actively fulfilling a particular facet of the varied, yet unified, ministry of this church that is so central to our identity as a Church of Jesus Christ in the world. We thank you for being active members of the Body of Christ just as we thank you in advance for your careful consideration and reflection as you partner with us in reviewing the last year's ministry and look toward fulfilling God's call on us in the coming year.

Attached is a carefully refined Annual Ministry Group Reflection and Evaluation Guide. This new document is meant to guide each Ministry Group in a time of reflection that will reveal much of the same highly valuable information that you provided last year, but in a much more succinct form. Whether you respond in full narrative answers or bullet-points is not our concern; answer as you see fit and as seems genuine to your Ministry Group's members. We only ask that your responses and reflections be thorough and considered. Further, the Session would like to stress its hope that this document will be completed by the entire Ministry Group through reflection and conversation together and not solely by the Moderator of the Ministry Group or any other individual. We ask this not only as a courtesy to individuals whom we do not wish to be overburdened with work, but also knowing that each individual brings a particular perspective on, and experience of, the work of each Ministry Group. It is our hope that your reflections and responses will be constructed in a way that is as representative of all members as possible.

As many of you have come to know, the Session has itself been through, and continues in, a process of reflecting on its own role as shepherd and overseer called by God both to serve and lead this congregation. That reflection has produced a "plumb line" for ministry and decision making (Amos 7:7-8) that the Session has determined to be a reflection of who God has called this church to be, and which the Session is implementing as a guide for decisions and discernment concerning the Spirit's direction for our faith community. We feel deeply that this plumb line should be at work in our church's Ministry Groups as well. For this reason, we request that each Ministry Group do one exercise in addition to completing the Reflection and Evaluation Guide. Included is the two page plumb line document. Please read it (familiarize yourself with its scope and spirit); then, choose JUST ONE of the nine "orienting covenants" and consider together the way or ways in which your Ministry Group can be about actively fulfilling that commitment. We do not ask for a long and involved response; but we do ask that you would provide a thoughtful response in whatever written form you see fit.

Please return the Ministry Group Reflection and Evaluation Guide along with both your group's reflection on one of the nine orienting covenants and your 2008 proposed budget to the church office by Sunday, October 21.

Again, we thank you for your ministry and your commitment, not only to La Verne Heights Presbyterian Church, but, ultimately, to the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. In the Gospel of Matthew chapter nine Jesus taught his disciples that the work of the Kingdom of God is great and the laborers are few and told them to pray for more laborers. You are an answer to their prayer.

Together in and for Christ,

Your Session