

FINAL SUMMIT PAPER

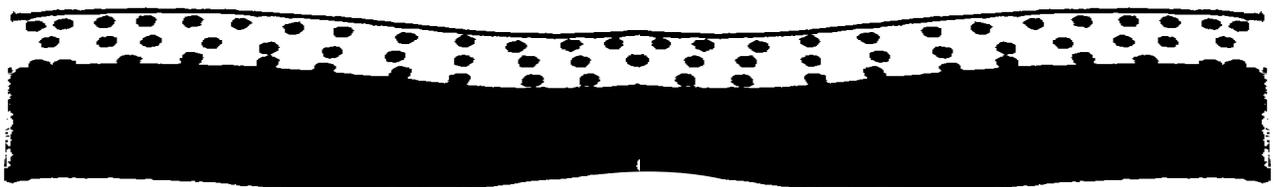


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Journey to the Summit

It was June 2008. The crisis in Zimbabwe was reaching new heights on a daily basis. The Presbytery of Denver was aware their partner, Presbytery of Zimbabwe, had an established Covenant of Friendship with the Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley. As conditions were worsening, it seemed important for the POZ, PGP and POD¹ to gather together. We all share a mutual interest in Zimbabwe. If we combined our efforts, we might gain greater efficiencies and grow to know one another in a new, broader bond. Perhaps the summit would focus on Zimbabwe but along the way we might learn more about each other and ourselves.

The planning began in earnest between the three presbyteries. The POZ requested we invite another POZ partner, the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom. Interest began to expand to the denominational level. The General Secretary of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, Rev. Jerry Pillay, committed to attending as did Doug Welch and Doug Tilton from Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In addition, due to the work of The Outreach Foundation (PCUSA), Zimbabwe Coordinator Rev. Bill Warlick was also invited.

The Very Reverend John Miller, retired Church of Scotland pastor and former Church of Scotland General Assembly Moderator, and his wife Mary were working in Zimbabwe. Learning about them and their great work led to the discovery of John's book *Reflections on the Beatitudes*. His insightful, contemporary, touching reflections provided the basis for our summit theme "A Gathering of Blessing."

Five Very Full Days

Summit participants met over a period of five days. We engaged in a variety of activities. We shared tea, coffee, lunch and often dinner. In this informal setting friendships were formed and deepened. We met in small groups for discussion as well as in plenary sessions. Perhaps the most significant activity of all was the shared worship. Here were individuals "coming from north and south, east and west to share in the Kingdom." Worship focused on the Beatitudes of Jesus. Elucidation of Jesus' teaching was found in a helpful little book, as mentioned above, produced by the Very Rev. John Miller. This was then taken and formed into inspiring worship for delegates led by the Rev. Tom Sheffield, Chaplain to the Summit. One example of what Tom had to say is given below.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Matthew 5:6

With this beatitude we are brought to remember that the blessing goes to those who try to make things right, just, and whole for all. We are led to consider not just giving the food but also working so that no one need be hungry and thirsty again. We are encouraged to think about the reasons that people would hunger and thirst at all in our world, in this

¹ Abbreviations used in this paper: Presbytery of Zimbabwe – POZ; Presbytery of Denver – POD; Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley – PGP; Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa – UPCS; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – PC(USA); United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom – URC.

time. With the church in nearly every country why would there be hungry and thirsty in any country? With abundance beyond measure evident for some, why would a few have nothing to keep their lives going?

We also are to remember that we are more than what is physical or superficial or temporary. We are to see that each is a whole and complete child of God, a gift of God, and a blessing for the world. We are to see that each one is needed for the kingdom to be the kingdom.

There are two things we need to keep in mind. The first is that lives of real people are at stake. What we do will decide if they will be satisfied, if they will live at all. And the second is that the struggle for justice, for wholeness, for the kingdom does not end quickly or soon. It demands that we keep working, that we go where others prefer not to go, that we ask the questions most avoid, that we look for the way that leads not just to satisfaction but to being and living in the kingdom of God.

Rev. Tom Sheffield, Zimbabwe Summit Chaplain

All participants in the Summit are agreed that we wish to play our part in improving the quality of life for people in Zimbabwe. Throughout our days together we have been ever mindful that we do so as partners, the Presbytery of Zimbabwe on the ground and the others at a distance, but all sharing the same goal. We are all part of the body of Christ, and, as such, engage in a shared ministry to the people of Zimbabwe.

Different Paths, Common Purpose

Each covenanted Partner found itself on a somewhat different path that resulted in their presence and participation in this summit. Understanding a bit of how those paths were taken laid the groundwork and context for our work together. Early in our time together representatives from the Presbytery of Denver, the Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley and the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (of which the Presbytery of Zimbabwe is a member) presented to the whole body the nature of their relationship to the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and a brief history of how it came to be. Toward the end of the Summit, the Rev. Dale Rominger of the United Reformed Church of the United Kingdom, shared how the Eastern Synod has been exploring a partnership with POZ and the difficulties encountered in arranging for reciprocal visits due to the United Kingdom's restrictive visa policies.

The Rev. Alistair Shaw, Moderator of the Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley, spoke of the "Covenant of Friendship" established between his presbytery and the Presbytery of Zimbabwe in October, 2006. As the title suggests, this Covenant of Friendship commits the partners to:

"The maintenance of the closest bonds of friendship, affection and Christian love despite the miles, and the joyful acceptance of whatever opportunities may be presented in time to come for each Presbytery to meet with representatives of the other; and complete openness to God's guidance as to the unfolding of the process we now initiate."

Covenant of Friendship

Elder Julia Henderson of the Presbytery of Denver addressed the “Memorandum of Understanding” entered into by the Presbytery of Denver and the Presbytery of Zimbabwe in August, 2005 which states:

“We recognize and embrace our desire for a relationship that will encompass all aspects of our presbyteries’ lives. We trust that God will use this partnership to enrich the mission vitality of the Body of Christ in Colorado, Zimbabwe and elsewhere.”

Memorandum of Understanding

The Rev. Jerry Pillay, General Secretary of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa spoke to the ongoing relationship between the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and its denomination, emphasizing the UPCSA’s commitment and ability to strengthen the Presbytery of Zimbabwe. Summit participants affirmed the contributions of the UPCSA to the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and its commitment to further assist the ministers and the people of Zimbabwe to enhance the fullness of life.

Finally, The Rev. Wilbert Sayimani, Moderator of the Presbytery of Zimbabwe, spoke of the Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper for the following purpose:

“In order to ensure that the 2009 Summit is really a time of restoring hope, creative planning as well as seeking consensus and committing to specific joint mission and foci, the POZ is highlighting some areas of concern for consideration during the Summit. These areas are from the priorities that the POZ has had over the last five years.”

Responses to the Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

Working in five small groups corresponding to the five areas of concern lifted up by the Presbytery of Zimbabwe for the summit’s consideration, each group followed a process that led to a variety of action plans. In presenting the responses found in the following pages, Summit participants commend the Presbytery of Zimbabwe for the good thought and work they are already doing in these areas. We humbly understood that as we worked we had neither all the answers nor all the knowledge and understanding necessary for comprehensive or even fully accurate responses. Nor have we any authority to make commitments on behalf of our represented governing bodies. They are merely our best attempt as partners with the POZ, at this time and place, to forge commonly agreed upon plans of action.

Many of the recommendations offered in these responses do provide opportunities for one or more of the participants of this Summit to partner in a variety of ways with the Presbytery of Zimbabwe. Each partner, including the POZ, is encouraged to explore with their appropriate governing bodies if, where and how these opportunities might be actualized.

The five primary areas of concern lifted up in the Zimbabwe Summit paper for our consideration (not in priority order):

- Presbytery Resource Development
- HIV/AIDS and Health Care
- Children at Risk
- Schools
- Church Growth

Group Responses

Presbytery Resource Development

“Even before the notable collapse of Zimbabwe’s economy, the Presbytery of Zimbabwe has always had a challenge of lack of resources for effective ministry.”²

We set a goal for the Presbytery of Zimbabwe to achieve both vital congregations and a vital presbytery. These will be achieved through these six most critical areas:

- Women’s ministries
- Congregational leadership
- Partners learning from each other
- Good stewardship and administration
- Sustainable Ministries (financial, material, human, and infrastructure)
- Ministers wanting to stay (caring for ministers including those retired)

Reporting Forward; Envisioning the Presbytery in Five Years

We envisioned what the Presbytery of Zimbabwe will be like in five years after improving the six areas listed above, compared it with the current status as mentioned in the Presbytery of Zimbabwe’s Pre-Summit Paper, and established *recommended goals and actions* which are in italics below.

Vision: We have sustainable ministries which are strong, growing and healthy, supported by mobilized and capacitated, skilled people and financial and material resources.

Current: The POZ covers the whole country of Zimbabwe with 32 congregations and over forty preaching stations. The POZ has always struggled to maintain ministers and as a result has often lost its ministers to Presbyteries in South Africa mainly, as well as to other overseas churches that are part of the Reformed tradition. Currently there are 14 ministers and 22 evangelists serving in the Presbytery.²

Discussion: It is difficult to continue to grow or support the church without trained pastors. Plans are in place to bring improved theological training to Zimbabwe. The group thought it might be helpful if the *POZ invited retired pastors to serve in the presbytery or help train students locally. Lydia Neshangwe’s studies at Denver Seminary are a joint venture between POZ and POD. The POD and POZ also plan to discuss short term training of a candidate in Denver. The UPSCA is redefining models of ministry* which will also allow POZ to recognize and utilize other forms of ministry.

Another important element is to *increase revenue within the congregations. UPSCA allows POZ to retain their assessments. The UPSCA also has volunteers willing to provide skills training to congregation members so they are able to earn an income and increase revenue to the congregation via stewardship. UPSCA volunteers are also willing to provide in kind services should they be helpful in Zimbabwe. The POZ has income generating projects and are also*

² Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

hoping to rent out the proposed women's training center as a source of income. It was suggested they also look for grants, scholarships, micro-loans for congregational members.

Vision: We have caring of and support for all ministers (active and retired) and their families in a holistic approach to their overall well-being.

Current: As has already been stated the POZ has a critical shortage of ministers and is struggling to retain the few that are there.³

Discussion: Most pastors in the POZ serve congregations that are not able to pay their stipends. Currently, many pastors have gone without pay for a month or more. The concept of a Central Fund would provide a way to ensure pastors are paid so they can focus on their ministry. *POZ and UPCSA will develop a structured Central Fund plan and budget by April, 2010. The POD indicated an interest in reviewing that information and would respond within 90 days of receiving the information.*

Spouses would like access to skills training so they could supplement their household income. *The UPCSA has a fund for such programs and encourages POZ to apply. Microloans and training for the loan applications was recently provided in partnership with The Outreach Foundation.*

Care for retired ministers was raised as a concern.

The new long leave program with POZ and POD begins in November.

Vision: We have vital ministries which consist of responsible and prayerful use of the time, talents and treasures offered as gifts from our members, and honoring God's creation.

Current: Of all the congregations and worship stations far less than fifty percent have their own buildings for worship purposes. For more than a decade now the POZ has operated a central office from rented space at City Presbyterian church in Harare. The relationship has had some trying moments for both sides but it is better than in the past where POZ activities and records were kept in voluntary individuals' homes.³

Discussion: The POZ addressed specific concerns about inadequate office space for meetings, staff offices and record storage. POZ indicated it was important to address this issue in the next few months. *POZ will evaluate whether to buy or rent a property for the Presbytery offices. If a short term solution is to rent, the POZ will determine a long term solution. An asset inventory will be conducted by POZ prior to making this decision.*

Communication within and outside the presbytery is hampered due to insufficient equipment. Jerry Pillay indicated the *UPCSA might be able to assist POZ in acquiring some equipment* like computers, fax, telephone, internet, and photocopy capabilities.

The Presbytery lacks financial management and record keeping skills. *POZ and PCUSA are working together to find a consultant* who will work with the Presbytery and congregations to

³ Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

develop administrative policies and systems that enhance accountability, transparency and efficiency.

All the areas are critical. Due to time limitations, we've given more emphasis to some areas than others but all remain priorities and deserve fuller discussion and attention from the POZ.

Vision: We have vital women's ministries in the church, with large numbers of women in active ministry as lay leaders, ministers and evangelists.

Current: Empowerment of women in the POZ is a notable area needing development of human resources. It is significant that since the General Assembly of the PCSA decided to ordain women in 1975 and the new UPCSAs has carried on with that tradition, the POZ has only ordained one woman to date. While the women members of the church are in the majority, women elders are a disturbingly low minority in the Presbytery. This is not an issue for political correctness for the POZ but an area where the Presbytery believes God challenges local culture to change.⁴

Discussion: We continue to encourage POZ to raise awareness of this critical need and to continue developing the leadership of women at the congregational and presbytery level.

Vision: We have vital congregations which are vibrant in worship and active in mission, led by well equipped and trained laypersons, evangelists and ministers, committed to continuing education.

Current: Church Development Evangelists are charged with the responsibility of developing new churches under existing sessions. The majority of the 22 Evangelists in the Presbytery have not been given the pre-requisite basic theological training which would greatly benefit them in their tasks.⁴

Discussion: The POZ is striving to develop and implement plans for providing training, while recognizing the added workload which will be required on the pastors of POZ.

Vision: As a result of our active partnership, we have expanded our knowledge and our exposure to cross-cultural interaction through learning, mutual respect and shared ministry, including resources which have strengthened our congregations and governing bodies.

Current: Just over five years ago the POZ came up with eight priority areas for its work, on which development of Partnerships and ecumenical relationships was one of the priorities. The POZ has enjoyed relating and working with individuals, congregations, presbyteries and denominations from various parts of the world. Each of these relationships has been unique both in quality and practical longevity. Of note have been the formal Partnerships that have resulted in the Summit of 2009.⁴

⁴ Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

Discussion: One of the desired outcomes of the Summit is to find ways in which Partnerships can be strengthened to enhance the unity of the church, for the sake of unity that Christ commanded and also prayed for as well as for the sake of mission that Christ came for.

HIV/AIDS and Health Care

“In a country with a collapsed health care system, the church is working to respond through the provision of clean water, health care services and income-generating projects for those with HIV/AIDS.”⁵

Impacting Church-State Relations through Prayer

Action Plan:

- Support with prayer and encourage continued POZ participation in Council of Churches dialogue with the government in policy-making decisions, especially in the area of health and agriculture.
- Encourage POZ, together with other churches, to continue claiming their prophetic voice.
- Engage as many persons as possible in the U.K., Denver and Zimbabwe in praying for the national leaders of Zimbabwe and for those working for a just and peaceful society.
 - Each participating body to develop a means of identifying specific prayer concerns and to communicate on a monthly basis these prayer requests to congregations. Each participating body share with the others for whom and what they are praying.
- POD and PGP continue to keep the concerns of Zimbabwe alive at the national church level of both the PC(USA) and Church of Scotland.

Time line: beginning immediately and carrying forth into the future

Expanding Health Care Services

In priority order

Congregation based Care:

Action Plan:

Enhance the ability of congregations to care for their members and community.

- Make available to POZ's Health Care Committee additional models for congregation-based volunteer (non-professional) health care promoters, provided by POD and other partners.
- Explore possibility of the Lomagundi Clinic, the Health Care committee and congregational home-based committees collecting, collating and disseminating best practices for grass roots health care.
- POZ explore the possibility of acquiring a staff person to serve as a congregation-based healthcare worker made available to all the congregations.
 - All participating partners to examine possible resources for personnel, salary, transportation and other necessary financial support.
- POZ encourage its congregations to address the high level of mental distress (depression and anxiety) within their communities by considering how to maximize their own resources for counseling and mutual support.
- POZ encourage its congregations to advocate for more resources for the mentally ill.

Time-line: short-term, one to three years

⁵ Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

Clinic Based Care:

Action Plan:

- Increase the effectiveness of the Lomagundi Clinic:
 - Use Lomagundi Clinic as a model for new clinic development.
 - Encourage the creation of a handbook/guide to clinic development based on the experience and learnings of the Lomagundi Clinic to be made available to others for establishing future clinics. The Presbytery of Denver Partnership will explore possible resources assistance to accomplish this project.
Time-line: short term one to three years
 - PGP explore extending the existing Presbytery of Denver's mission partnership to include partners in the U.K.
Time line: short term, one to two years

Action Plan:

- Celebrating the fact that the POZ is working on establishing three new clinics, in consideration of the difficulty in raising needed resources, it is recommend that POZ consider concentrating its efforts on starting only one of the three new clinics at this time. Consideration may also be given to placing this clinic at or near one of the presbytery's schools.
 - Once the requisite assessments of potential location, resources (human and material), etc. has been made and a plan is formulated, POD and PGP will explore the possibilities of establishing new mission partnerships.
 - Explore the possibility of POZ partnering with an existing or struggling government clinic.
 - Explore the possibility of POZ partnering with other NGO's in establishing a new or existing health care facility or service.
Time line: short term, one to three years.

Improving Supply of Clean Water, Food, Sanitation and Energy:

Action Plan:

- Encourage local churches and communities to partner with NGO's that are addressing these needs within their communities.
 - Streamline POZ processes for approving local initiatives and local church collaboration with NGO's.
Time line: short term, two to three years.

Water:

Action Plan:

- Recommend that POZ engage local community leaders in exploring the possibility of boreholes in those church communities where the need is the greatest. Consideration might be given to locating new wells in conjunction with any school-based clinics.
 - Invite the POD and PGP to explore the possibility of financial support.

Food:

Action Plan:

- Recommend that POZ encourage and facilitate those congregations who are currently implementing "Farming God's Way" (Foundations for Farming/conservation

farming) project to continue sharing their experience and expertise with other appropriate churches within the presbytery.

Energy (Without electricity, food production/nutrition and sanitation are severely impacted):

Action Plan:

- Participating partners research potential means of providing alternative energy sources and other appropriate technologies.
e.g.: Lutheran Church in Gweru use of solar power
e.g.: Waterless toilets. – information provided by POD
Time line: short-term, one to three years for research, not including possible implementation

Changing Attitudes that Affect both Men's and Women's Health.

Status of Women

Action Plan

- Encourage the Presbytery to continue holding pastor/spouse retreats utilizing persons from outside the presbytery for leadership.
- Address issues of women's empowerment, especially as it pertains to women's reproductive and other health concerns.
- Encourage pastors to communicate / educate their congregations.
- Partners to provide outside leadership for these retreats.
Time line: this coming year's pastor/spouse retreat

Stigma of HIV/AIDS

Action Plan:

- Recommend that the Uniting Presbyterian Women's Fellowship and church associations extend the establishment of support groups for people affected by HIV/AIDS in their congregations to all congregations of the Presbytery.
Time line: short-term, one to two years

Children at Risk

“Extreme poverty and the highest percentage of orphans in the world has moved the presbytery to care for the children in their congregations and community by providing school fees, caregiver support, strengthening informal schooling programs and supplying food.”⁶

We dared to imagine what God’s dream of peace might look like for children at risk. Through our discussions, we acknowledged that all children are at risk at some level, but especially the children of Zimbabwe in the 21st century. We envisioned God’s realm as one in which, at a minimum:

- Every child will be known by name (not by their lot in life, i.e., street kid).
- Every child will be nurtured in a community of love (family, extended family, caregivers, churches, schools, etc.) that gives them a place to belong and to grow into the fullness of their humanity.
- Every child will have safety, shelter, health care, stability, and comfort.
- Every child will have access to education that offers knowledge as well as skills-training, character-formation and hope.

These ideals are integral to the 5 focus areas which we identified through our brainstorming, and the 3 which we prioritized as most urgent, listed below. While we did not have the voices of our colleagues from the UPCSA, Church of Scotland, or the URC in our particular group, we believe they may have experiences and materials that could be good resources for the Presbytery of Zimbabwe as well.

Gloag Ranch

This is a combined initiative of the Schools small group and the Children at Risk small group. The POZ has long desired to use this mission school land to teach farming or ranching skills to Gloag students. They would learn skills for future work, grow food for the school community, and generate income that could be used to reduce school fees and provide scholarships. The size of the property was unknown at the time of this discussion and is essential to the future analysis and plan.

Short Term Goal – Members of Highlands Church with farming and ranching expertise would be invited to share their wisdom and assess the Gloag Ranch land to determine what kind of use is best suited (farming, ranching, other), and the steps to be taken (and resources needed) to prepare the land for use. This invitation and written assessment would be completed in 3 months.

The Schools Trust Committee would receive the assessment and prepare a recommendation and plan for next steps. The timeline for completion would be within 3 months of receipt of the report of the Highlands Church farmers. The use of Foundations of Farming (formerly known as Farming God’s Way) curriculum would be part of the Schools Trust Committee’s evaluation for use as well.

⁶ Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

Mid-Term Goal – Goals and timing will depend upon the outcome of the assessment and Schools Trust Committee’s recommendation. It is our hope that that within 12 to 24 months, a plan is in place and the land use is underway.

Long-Term Goal – In 5 years, Gloag Ranch will be a working property that produces income and food, supports the feeding of the school community, teaches land-use skills to students, provides for the reduction or elimination of school fees for students as a work-study program, and is operated in a way that benefits and strengthens the school and surrounding community.

Piggery and Poultry

Self-sustaining projects. It is our understanding that the POZ has begun the installation and operation of piggery and/or poultry operations at some schools and will identify other sites for the future. These communities will commit to feeding, sheltering, and caring for these animals, as well as teach the skills to young people, and raise the pigs and poultry for food in a self-sustaining manner. Once a piggery and/or poultry operation is successfully established, new sites would be selected.

Short Term – in the next 3 months, the POZ would provide information to interested partners about the costs and plans for the piggery and poultry operations. Partners could explore the possibility of assistance in the next 3 months in at least 2 ways:

- Help the POZ with grant requests to organizations that are funding projects like these, such as the PCUSA’s Self Development of People program, or Heifer International.
- Denver’s mission partnership structure would lend itself to a partnership among churches interested in a “Heifer-like” program. Perhaps POD congregations could relate to and be enthusiastic about joining with the POZ to raise funds to “buy a piglet” or “buy six chicks.” The funds would be used to purchase animals and not to buy feed (so as not to create a donor dependency, i.e., the operation must sustain itself after the initial funding assistance). The PZDP will explore the mission partnership possibility.

Mid Term – In one year, the POZ would have one successful, self-sustaining piggery and/or poultry operation that benefits the larger school community with ongoing food and/or income and skills-training.

Long-term – in 5 years, the POZ would have 5 successful, self-sustaining piggeries and/or poultry operations that benefit their communities with ongoing food and/or income and skills-training.

Mentoring

Replicate strong programs for children at risk that are working in one part of the Presbytery of Zimbabwe in other regions. For example, the City Church program for Harare children at risk appears to have much to offer that other congregations could implement. The Lomagundi Church in Chinhoyi has had success with an after school program. The South Metro Saints Mission Partnership in the Presbytery of Denver has started a mentoring program for children that might be a useful model in the Presbytery of Zimbabwe. Churches are great places for children and youth to connect with good adult role models. In a country of high unemployment,

there are adults with knowledge and skills to share with children, and who also would benefit from a mentoring relationship. Children need safe places to play, and dedicated study time with guidance. Mentoring programs could also be a venue for parenting and health education classes for caregivers. A church sanctuary could be used during the week for a mentoring program.

Our group struggled with creating a plan and timeline for this area without knowing whether or not “mentoring” is something the POZ would want to implement. We offer the following as suggestions for consideration, and not with any intent to impose our “solution”:

- a. The appropriate Presbytery committees would research what City Church’s and Lomagundi’s programs have done well. They could look at the Hispanic ministries ministry model from Denver (and perhaps other partners). The Committees would draft a model plan that other churches could study and consider for implementation.
- b. The Presbytery would present the model(s) for mentoring at workshops in Presbytery regions. Pastors, elders and other lay leaders would take this information to their Sessions, Women’s Fellowship, Men’s Fellowship, Youth leadership, etc. for their consideration and brainstorming. With commitment from volunteer mentors in the congregation, the Presbytery might invite a partner to send someone with mentor program training knowledge to come to the Presbytery to assist it in organizing the program in a new church.
- c. The Zimbabwe delegate(s) would talk with the appropriate Presbytery committees within the next 3 months to determine whether or not this is a path that it wishes to pursue.

As members of the Zimbabwe Summit, we have heard from our partners about the troubling circumstances that are faced by many children in Zimbabwe. We feel the urgency of responding as the body of Christ to recapture a generation of children before they are lost to the devastations of their time and place. We acknowledge and are grateful for the tremendous work that has been accomplished by the Presbytery of Zimbabwe. We appreciate the invitation to dream alongside them about the next steps, and offer our thoughts as encouragement and support for further development of existing programs and implementation of new initiatives. We are grateful for the hard work that has been undertaken by the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and stand with it in working to bring about a common dream: Zimbabwe as a place where all children know they belong to a loving and caring community, with access to shelter, food, health, and education, and the shared hope of the realization of God’s dream for their future.

Schools

“Through their nine schools, the Presbytery of Zimbabwe struggles to provide an education which is accessible to poor families.”⁷

A Vision for Schools

We envision a generational transformation of identity in Christ that nurtures hope and ownership in community to strengthen faith in Christ and rebuild Zimbabwe.

We understand that the POZ and its churches work in partnership with the government of Zimbabwe in the education of children in Zimbabwe.

Considering the Zimbabwe Summit Paper and the POZ Education Trust Policy Document we pledge within the framework of the partnership to journey with the POZ in the implementation of the trust document.

Facilities

This area encompasses a wide range of issues from school fees, books, building repair, etc. However, we focused on the need for clean, adequate water. Water impacts food production, health care and basic daily needs to name just a few. Given the plan on the part of the POZ to start additional medical clinics and likely use school settings for that purpose we saw a critical link between the two. Therefore we suggest the following:

Water (Basic and essential human rights/needs)

Short Term Goals:

- Gather information on water situation at the 9 schools (number of wells, amount of storage, maintenance issues, plumbing issues, etc. This would also include information from the POZ about which schools are selected as sites for medical clinics. Those schools should be given priority for the development of adequate water. (Assigned: School Trust).
- Needs assessment for each school and budget related to water needs (Assigned: School Trust).
- Make connections between congregations and schools to provide for well construction (Assigned: Partners - PGP, POD, URC, etc., volunteer from each partner to organize connection).

Mid Term Goals:

- Garner resources; who in Zimbabwe can construct wells? Training? (Assigned: POZ).

Long Term Goals:

- Ongoing maintenance of water wells and systems (Assigned: Presbytery of Zimbabwe).

Relationships

In the spirit of partnership we see the importance of encouraging relationships among our youth for ministry, fellowship and to develop a culture of partnership for future generations. Possibilities could include school links, exchange programs, and twinnings, etc.

⁷ Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

Church Growth

“The presbytery is experiencing exciting numerical growth but concurrent spiritual growth is a concern without additional Bibles, hymnals, Christian Education materials and the funding to allow oversight of this new church growth.”⁸

Hopes and Dreams: All churches with outstations can receive and draw resources through the larger church.

- Identify both existing and required resources for the future.
- What resources are needed? What resources are missing?
- Use DVDs to mutually understand cultures.
- Is there a use or place for personnel from outside Zimbabwe to be used there?
- What monies are being expended now?
- Who needs to sit down and do strategic planning? What team? Church Development & Planning?
- Increase targeted donations for these resources for new church plantings.
- We rejoice in the current twenty-two evangelists and the current plans to train them for their work. We recognize the details of this are still in process. We also see this adding tremendous work on the existing and limited number of pastors in POZ. Yet, we know they will do the best possible training.
- Establish accountability for the process by appointing a coordinator for church plants that can help coordinate, support, train and resource the twenty-two current and future evangelists.
- Coordinator might be better able to make a difference if they were from Zimbabwe. Identify who should be hired.
- Identify monies to pay Coordinator and resources for their work, including transportation. What would a Coordinator be paid? What would the cost of housing, transportation, etc.? How is that position sustained for the long term?
- Develop job description for a Church Growth Coordinator and financial plan to pay for it.
- Establish accountability process connected with the funding for the position.

Initial Action Goals

- Church Development and Planning Committee will develop a job description for a Church Growth Coordinator that includes supervision, accountability, costs for salary, housing, transportation and programs by April 1, 2010.
- All partners will take the job description and explore broad options for funding this position and report back by September 1, 2010.
(This new position is about providing more and better church planting resources, and is also about taking work away from the current ministers and providing resources to the ministers.)

Hopes and Dreams: Outstations have appropriate resources for training local leadership (evangelists and elders).

⁸ Presbytery of Zimbabwe Pre-Summit Paper

- Translate current catechism into languages to be used. Evidently, a new catechism is being written based on a newly written Statement of Faith. Expectation is that it will be finished and available in the next year. The plan is to have it translated into the needed languages and the General Assembly would pay for it. Could currently used resources be translated into local languages? There may not be resources available to do this. Translations of resources very rarely happen presently, due to time and cost. Do we wait for the General Assembly to make this happen?
- Coordinate the existing outstations and establish new ones through Presbytery.
- Provide Bibles and hymnals in local languages. They can be purchased.
- Investigate availability of hymnals and Bibles in Shona and Ndebele, and the cost. Match individual churches, both here and there, with outstations to provide these? The Presbytery arranges with a printer to have them printed and available.
- Denver Presbytery has been reluctant to match individual churches here with churches there, but churches here could raise funds for the general purchase of these materials there.
- Establish a sustainable fund for purchase of hymnals and Bibles.

Initial Action Goals:

- Church Development and Planning Committee will clarify the process of printing Bibles and Hymnals in Shona and Ndebele, and the cost of doing so, by February 1, 2010.
- The same committee will identify and report the number of Bibles and Hymnals needed at each outstation and the cost by February 1, 2010, and arrange their distribution.
- Partner organization will explore and define the process for funding the printing cost of needed Bibles and Hymnals by February 1, 2010.
- We chose not to write a specific goal in relationship to translating the current English catechism because the General Secretary of the General Assembly of UPCSA has assured us that the new catechism will be translated into Shona and Ndebele in the next year or two.

Hopes and Dreams: Increased Number of Ordained Ministers in POZ

- Difficulty in training outside the country.
- Limited resources at the denominational level.
- Limited personal funds.
- United Theological College is not accredited to offer needed degrees.

Informal Action Steps

Further discussion in informal conversations led us to request that the committee members check with contacts in various seminaries to explore connections with United Theological College in Zimbabwe and their seminaries so that UTC might acquire an acceptable standard. Perhaps, in this regard, partners might be able to offer lecturers from our denominations to spend a sabbatical teaching in the college.

Developing and Strengthening Connections

To present the reports of group discussions tells only half the story of what went on at the Summit. Having been exposed to many cross-cultural interactions has led us to increased knowledge and mutual respect. Individuals shared conversations with each other. Sometimes these were concerned simply with getting to know each other, but often they crossed denominational boundaries and led to the formation of new partnerships. The result is that we now relate to each other as well as to our friends from Zimbabwe. It is hoped that these new partnerships may be maintained and developed in the coming months. We hope and anticipate that as partners we will all be committed to praying for each other in our varying situations. At the very least it is hoped that we can communicate with each other over matters relating to Zimbabwe. But who knows where, under the leading of God's Spirit, our new friendships may lead?

Next Steps...

The summit has now ended with the completion of this report. This report is not, however, an ending in the truest sense. Rather, it is a beginning with steps to follow. To be certain, we have not tried to provide all of the answers and solutions that are faced in Zimbabwe, but we understand our thoughts, hopes, dreams and responses to be a beginning to our mutual efforts of responding to our POZ partner in meaningful, significant ways. It is the earnest hope of all who have been involved that the Summit and this report will lead to action. It is for the governing bodies of each participant to study this report, to debate it, and decide which of the recommendations, if any, it wishes to embrace. All the partners in this venture are encouraged to distribute the report as widely as possible and appropriate for discussion and possible action.

Summit participants have indicated a desire for regular communication between the partners and some means of monitoring and accountability, as well. John and Mary Miller have graciously accepted this challenging task of communicating, monitoring and holding each of us accountable. Each partner agrees to keep all other partners and the Millers informed about their intentions and to report regularly on their progress. When timely reporting is not forthcoming, our facilitators, Mary and John, will follow up to inquire and to encourage continued communication and activity where appropriate. We participating partners commit ourselves to working with them, supporting them and co-operating in this very important role.

It is certainly not anticipated that any single body will undertake to do everything. If each of the Summit partners strive to accomplish something, we can make a significant difference for the people of Zimbabwe.