

November 2023 Report of the Presbytery Roundtable

We committed to the Presbytery in 2022 when we returned to hybrid Presbytery meeting post-pandemic that we would evaluate after about a year to see how the new format was working and what we were learning about patterns and attendance.

- We have a consistent 30/70 attendance percentage split. 30% in person and 70% online. The “who” of this number changes, based on where we are meeting. *What we have learned is that online remains the preferred method of meeting, and folks just are not willing to drive much distance at all.*
- Many of our congregations pivoted to online meetings/hybrid worship during the pandemic, but not all have continued, with many going to broadcast only post-pandemic. *What we have learned is that not as many congregations as we thought are able to support hybrid Presbytery meetings moving forward.*
- With the COM and CPM becoming commissions, there is not as much business that needs to be attended to at Presbytery meetings. *What we have learned is that we do not need as many business meetings in a year as before.*
- The needs of congregations and clergy are shifting to relationship building, resourcing and teaching and the interest in meeting for meeting’s sake is low. *What we have learned is that we need to offer more opportunities in-person and online for relationships and resourcing.*

With these learnings, and after a small task force of the Roundtable looked into them, we are proposing the following Presbytery meeting schedule for 2024, which would also include setting aside #3.1 of our Bylaws for one year. After a year, we will reassess again, because we are still, along with our ministries, in a time of shifting and changing boundaries and priorities to which we want to remain responsive.

Thursday, February 8, 7:00 pm

Saturday, May 4, 10:00 am

Wednesday, October 23, 7:00 pm

The Roundtable will be coming out with additional suggestions around our zoom meetings for 2024 which will include regional in-person gatherings for these meetings, and also set forward the resourcing and training opportunities for the year, alongside a clergy retreat. We want to raise up and commend practices like the monthly clergy luncheon for RI clergy and the dinner party that was held by some clergy while they zoomed into our Presbytery meeting in September as new ways of gathering. We want to expand more of these creative opportunities that speak to how gatherings happen and make meaning for today’s context.