

## Mission Table

Rev. Craig A. Miller

The *Mission Table*, through regular conversations, seeks to discern ways for our synod to help congregations carry out Mission, and endeavors to connect congregations to each other and the wider church.

We gather up to eight times in the year to share ideas and observations from our encounters in congregations and conferences with members and our surrounding communities. The Mission Table includes members of the Small Church Mission Team, the Transformational Ministry Team, and the Missional River coaches.

Like many tables in our homes, the Mission Table invites many to the conversation. Participation at the Table includes those who have made a commitment to regular attendance as well as some who might drop in unexpectedly. Dates for Mission Table gatherings are posted on the synod website and in the Ark.

The Mission Table is currently working on a five-year strategy for our synod that will guide much of our activity. At quarterly gatherings of the *Mission Strategy Table* we will develop this strategy accompanied by the *Mission Support Table*.

Ongoing initiatives under the Mission Table include:

- **Small Church Mission Team**
  - Reviews grant requests and makes recommendation to Synod Council for action.
  - Monitors active grants. Four congregations have received grants in 2017:
    - United In Christ, West Milton – funds a part-time coordinator and programing for ministry to senior citizens.
    - St John’s, Richfield – providing food for needy children through their “Tiger Treats” program.
    - St John’s, Potts Grove – funds supplies for their ministry to senior citizens.
    - Zion, Turbotville – funds advertising and other expenses for developing a new worship service.
  - Arranged for presentations on issues related to small congregations.
- **Transformational Ministry**
  - Helps congregations to look outward, beyond church walls, to see how they can impact their communities
- **Missional River**
  - Building on Transformational Ministry, assists congregations to develop relationships among members and with their surrounding communities for the purpose of growing in mission.
- **Congregational Speed Dating**
  - Congregations in the North Branch Conference are gathering in a process intended to seek opportunities for partnerships that will enable our small congregations to become more effective in mission.