



Potomac Association

Central Atlantic Conference-United Church of Christ

Potomac Association Fall Meeting 2009

Emmaus UCC-Vienna, VA
Saturday, October 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Specifics

Strengthening Partnerships:

What Matters to you? Matters to Us:

A Time to Share our gifts and moments in ministry together.

This meeting was developed by the Association Strategic Planning Committee, recently charged with the task of “strengthening partnerships” between the Local Churches in the Association. The Theme of this meeting comes from the book of the same title by Rev. Sidney D. Fowler (Interim Pastor, Hope UCC-Alexandria, VA), used with his permission

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Agenda

8:30 Registration, Continental Breakfast

9:00 Opening Plenary

Call to Prayer

Call To Order/Reading of the Roll Call

Approval of the Minutes from the Spring 2009 Meeting

Saturday May 16, 2009; Plymouth Congregational UCC-Washington, DC

Report of the Board of Directors

Moderator's Report

Treasurer's Report

Presentation of the Budget and Assessments for 2010 (Pages 3-5)

Presentation on the Plans for the Future of Finances in the Association

Associate Conference Minister's Report

Report on the "Strengthening Partnerships" initiative

Outcomes from the Spring 2009 Meeting (Page 6)

Other Business for the Assembly

Welcome of Church In-Care: *Covenant Baptist Church-Washington, DC*

9:45 Continuing our mission of **Strengthening Partnerships:**

What Matters to you? Matters to Us:

A Time to Share our gifts and moments in ministry together.

A Gift from the Author: the insights of Sid Fowler

10:15 Breakout Sessions: Feedback/Reflection Groups (Page 7)

"What Matters to You?"

The goal of these sessions is to organize our mission and meetings outside of the Fall and Spring Meetings. One product of these sessions will be the updates to the Association calendar.

11:15 Report Back to the Assembly, and Next Steps

11:30 Lunch and Displays

12:30 Closing Worship and Communion

1:30 Adjournment

Minutes from the Spring Meeting

8:30 Registration, Continental Breakfast

9:15 Opening Plenary

Call To Order/Reading of the Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Hank Fairman (Moderator) at 9:15.

MOTION: to approve the Agenda for The Meeting—Arlene King-Berry (Peoples Congregational UCC-Washington, DC); David Diesselhorst (Bethel UCC-Arlington VA); Motion carried unanimously

Roll call of Churches called by Hank Fairman. Quorum established.

MOTION: to grant voice to Community of All People-Reston, VA at this meeting (Graylan Hagler, Plymouth UCC-Washington DC) Second Vern Ahrens (Little River UCC-Annandale, VA); Approved unanimously

Approval of the Minutes from the Fall 2008 Meeting (10/25/08-Rockville United Church-Rockville, MD)

MOTION: to approve the Minutes with amendment—David Diesselhorst (Bethel UCC, Arlington VA); Second, Doug Griffin (Lincoln Congregational Temple-Washington, DC); Motion carried unanimously

Report of the Board of Directors

Moderator's Report

Treasurer's Report

Discussion of churches which have made their assessment payments. Notice of quarterly reminders and upcoming expenses, especially for funding campus ministries

Associate Conference Minister's Report

Highlights from the report. Acknowledges moving forward with tremendous leadership, including Hank Fairman's work. Presented LaVerne Gill (chaplain at Chautauqua and in Ghana).

LaVerne Gill: spoke about Lilly Endowment—clergy renewal endowment. Dollar values increased—information available online.

Speaker from Interfaith Worker Justice (national organization; chapter in DC, not in VA), discussion of Free Choice Act

Jessica Champagne SEIU—thankful for work of people of faith regarding Employee Free Choice Act

Cliff Frasier (Riverside Church, NYC; Faith Coordinator for SEIU) working on health care reform legislation. Interfaith Mobilization June 24 in DC. Lift up religious voices in health care reform. Clergy breakfast this Wednesday at first trinity Lutheran church/First Congregational UCC

Introduced new clergy serving in the Association—Michael Murphy (Peoples UCC)

Reports from the Chairs of Standing Committees

Christian Education (No Additions)

Church and Ministry

Letha Dreyfus thanked the people who have helped with the Polity Institutes, and invites people to learn more about them. (refer to report).

Offered certificates of appreciation for those who have helped: Sid Fowler, Janet Parker, Donna Schramm, Reuben Tendai, Art Waidmann, and Barbara Brown Zikmund.

Two new transfers into PA this year: Jessica Peterson (ordained March 29, 2009; will be installed at Westmoreland on Sunday May 31, as Minister for Children, Youth, and Families; installation council prior to Installation service) and Michael Murphy

Higher Education (No Additions)

Local Church Development

Social Action and Mission

Doug Hodges noted the following changes in report: anti-racism working group has been added. Next working date is left open. Rev Allyson Smith is convening.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Approval of the Nominations for the Class of 2009

Correction: Higher Education—Remove Sandra Bonds, add Carolyn Williams (Peoples)

Higher Ed: Martha Huelsbeck (Rock Spring-Arlington); Doug Snyder (correct category)

Nominate: Ann Wisenborn (Christ Congregational UCC) to Social Action

Nominate: James Mack (Peoples) to Social Action

Correction: Social Action—remove Sharlissa Moore

Nominate: Julie Holm (Little River) to Social Action

MOTION: to approve the Slate of Nominees for office, as amended— Carolyn Richar (Bethel UCC); Arlene King Berry (Peoples) Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business for the Assembly

Report from the Conference Minister

Rev. John Deckenback presented information on:

Conference Staffing and Finances

The CAC Annual Meeting

General Synod in Grand Rapids, including the farewell to John Thomas and the nomination of Geoffrey Black (NY Conference Minister) as General Minister and President of the UCC

Jim Bundy (Sojourners UCC, Charlottesville) as new president of the CAC.

A Budget discussion on Our Church's Wider Mission (handout distributed)

A comment from floor--Concern about "bunker mentality" when the market goes down (a recurring pattern). At no point has there been constructive discussion about church development and planting to strengthen the conference, something which requires investment. Should be embracing evangelism.

Discussion in the context of welcoming new congregations into the Association

10:15 Special Report from the Association Strategic Planning Committee: Strengthening Partnerships

Strengthening Partnerships: Ministry in Such a Time as This

for people, for congregations, and for our life together

Hank Fairman offered a baseline presentation on the strength of finances within the Association churches, and commented on money as an indicator of ministry.

10:45 Breakout Sessions: Feedback/Reflection Groups

"Issues, not Answers"

The feedback from these sessions is included in an attached report.

11:15 Report Back to the Assembly, and Next Steps

11:30 A Special Report from the Committee on Social Action and Mission:

The COREM Statement on the restructuring of the National Setting of the UCC: The United Church Board
Note: The motion for discussion is titled "version 4B". Any additions/corrections will be distributed after this discussion as "version 4C"

A presentation from Noemi Parilla-Mena (Plymouth UCC), and Art Waidmann (Bethesda UCC) was given on the Resolution.

MOTION: to consider the resolution

A Friendly amendment to rephrase the Resolution—Art Waidmann (UCC-Bethesda, MD); Letha Dreyfus (Grace Reformed-Washington, DC)

Hank Fairman proposed the model for discussing the Resolution.

MOTION: to consider parliamentary procedure for discussion--Julie Holm (Little River UCC-Annandale, VA); Zilla Wesley (Peoples Congregational-Washington, DC). Affirmed unanimously

After a brief period of discussion, the question was called to affirm the resolution as read and amended: Motion carried by voice of acclamation, with one dissent.

Other Business

Kwame Osei Reed read and distributed a OCWM Acknowledgement Letters and Covenant Keepers

Kwame Osei Reed introduced and acknowledged Pearson Kemp, incoming chair of the Exdecutive Committee of the United Church of Christ

Closing prayer and blessing of the meal by Rev Rebecca West

The meeting was adjourned, with lunch and worship following.

Supplemental Reports

Report on the “Strengthening Partnerships” initiative: Feedback from Spring Meeting

Strengthening Partnerships: Ministry in Such a Time as This
for people, for congregations, and for our life together

The meeting was developed by the Association Strategic Planning Committee, recently charged with the task of “strengthening partnerships” between the Local Churches in the Association.

The following information is compiled from three of the feedback/reflection groups.

1. The economy is in distress - one thing you would like for church or self?
 - Enhanced sense of ownership of the UCC
 - Communication
 - More interaction from the Association to local churches
 - less silos, more camaraderie
 - Reclaim or spirituality and anchor ourselves in the Steadfast love of God
 - Local congregations feel more valued
 - More focus on spirituality - less on finances
 - Take stock of who we are

2. How does sharing in ministry w/ Association benefit you personally?
 - Sense of belonging to something bigger
 - Prevents stagnation
 - Not much benefit since we don't share
 - Not enough opportunity to share
 - Sharing testimonies

3. How does sharing - benefit your church?
 - For forming new congregations
 - Help good once in midst of a crisis
 - Help w/ call process for a new pastor
 - Help has been available when requested
 - Love the autonomy - but covenantal relationships between congregations
 - Need a better sense of "covenantal relationship" with emphasis on this church is "the Association"
 - Cross fertilization between established and new churches

4. Do the leaders of Association have the capacity?
 - Maybe we don't have the resources
 - Need better training
 - People are stretched
 - Paid staff overwhelmed likely
 - Many churches / pastors in crisis

5. What more would you like from the Association?
 - Inventory resources
 - New ways to do things - conference calls using technology
 - Pooling resources
 - Drawing closer to Christ
 - Being fiscally responsible
 - Rotating Potlucks - potlucks need a theme/focus, not just a meal
 - More dialogue about forming a diverse worship experience
 - Easier process on established churches wishing to affiliate with UCC
 - creating ministries that an individual congregation can not support alone
 - Association leadership visitation
 - Increased times together - not just for business

6. What opportunities are there for us to unite as persons and congregations of faith?
 - Continue Racism conversation
 - Rotating Potlucks - potlucks need a theme/focus, not just a meal
 - Understanding different ministry types
 - Broaden our perspective
 - Together few become many

7. What is the one program, ministry, activity at your church you would lift up to the Association?
 - Clothes Closet
 - Food Pantry
 - Crop Walk
 - Habitat for Humanity
 - El Salvador Clinic support
 - Familycrisis center
 - Adult Education

8. How can we better communicate?
 - Go other churches to talk about what you are doing
 - Post them on website
 - Rally/Retreat for the whole Association
 - Combined Young Adult Events
 - Facebook
 - Rotating Potlucks - potlucks need a theme/focus, not just a meal

A Sense of the Room was called: more gatherings than twice a year, but not for “business”? This was affirmed by the assembly, and will be addressed by the Board and Committees of the Association.

Breakout Sessions: Feedback/Reflection Groups

Topics

Possible Groups for Leadership

1. We are People of God's Extravagant Welcome

Evangelism, Outreach, and Congregational Identity

Local Church Development

Possible Discussion Areas:

Social Networking

Website Development/E-vangelism

2. We Belong to Christ

Faith Formation and Religious Education

Christian Education

Possible Discussion Areas:

Children's Ministry

Youth Ministry

Confirmation/New Member Development

Adult Ministry, Seekers, 20s/30s

3. We Are a People of Covenant, a United and Uniting Church

Our Church's Wider Mission and Ecumenical Ties

Higher Education

Possible Discussion Areas:

Outreach to Campus Ministries

Connections to area Seminaries

Interfaith Conference of Greater Washington

4. We Are One at Baptism and the Table

Inspiring Worship and Celebration

?????

Possible Discussion Areas:

Sing! Praise and Prayer

Emergent Worship

Multigenerational Worship

5. We Thank God by Working for a Just and Loving World

Social Action, Advocacy, and Mission

Social Action & Mission

Possible Discussion Areas:

Connections with the DC Justice Witness office

PA Anti-Racism/CAC Anti-Racism Task Forces

Healing Communities

6. We Listen for the Still-speaking God

New Horizons in Ministry Together

Churches involved in Church Vitality

Possible Discussion Areas:

Interim Ministry Network

Congregational Vitality/CAC Church Vitality