

MINUTES

Northwest Regional Board Meeting, October 17-18, 2008

The Northwest Regional Christian Church regional board gathered for a two-day meeting at United Christian Church on October 17-18, with Cherilyn Williams, moderator, chairing the meeting.

Attending were:

Officers: Cherilyn Williams, moderator
David Moffitt, vice-moderator
Lillian Moir, secretary
Debbie Jennison, treasurer
Rebecca Hale, interim transitional regional minister

Members: Dixie Carringer Sophie Rice-Sauer
Jim Harwood Gary Shoemaker
Jong Hong Ronna Smith
Debbie Little Lauri Clark Strait
Zak Longoria Dalene Vasbinder
Barbara Reynolds

Absent were David Helseth, Laura Reed and Sally Smith.

Also present for the meeting was Bill Jennison, chair of the region's income development group.

Rebecca Hale and Cherilyn Williams led the opening worship.

Board members introduced each other, then heard a history of the board, including its fiscal history. The new members were told that board meetings are intended to reach consensus. If a proposed action is opposed, reasons need to be given and alternatives offered.

1. REGIONAL REPORT

Reports from regional committees, commissions and ministries and ecumenical involvements were presented. Full reports are on file at the regional office. Among the highlights are:

- **Cooperative Ministries in Higher Education.** This report was sent by Paul Rodkey, director of campus ministry at Eastern Washington State University who is the current president of the commission. This ministry supports programs at state-supported four-year colleges and universities in Washington and North Idaho. For example, the annual Roger Williams Symposium at Washington State University, scheduled October 24-25, will feature a discussion led by Muslim intellectual Dr. Omid Safi.
- **Commission on the Ministry.** The commission, chaired by Joan Dennehy, interviewed four individuals at its September 26-27 meeting: M.L. Daniel, Sarasopa Enari, Martha Tanner and Sharon Nichols, all of Seattle. Enari is a chaplain at Providence Hospital. Daniel, Tanner and Nichols are students at Seattle University

- **Ana and Tod Gobledale.** Marvin Eckfeldt, itineration coordinator, submitted a report on the Gobledales' visits in the region on their return from their service in Australia. They visited 39 congregations, with an attendance of 765 persons. Offerings of \$4,413.98 were collected for Global Ministries to cover the Gobledales' in-region travel costs, which totaled \$2,477.43. They now are interim ministers at Kirkland United Church of Christ.
- **Journey of Discovery.** This congregational transformation program was initiated in the region in September 2005. Currently eight congregations are in phases three and four, with one congregation's participation on hold. Three congregations entered phase one with a consultant training workshop on August 23, 2008, and congregational coordinating teams' training on September 13. Bill and Connie Robey are regional co-coordinators.
- **New Beginnings.** Eleven congregations are involved in the process of revitalization of their ministries and planning for the future. Rebecca Hale is the regional liaison for six congregations and Marvin Eckfeldt, for five. Marvin also is writing a manual for Church Extension to help regions organize for this work.
- **New Church Companion Team.** This team, chaired by Rod Smith, is looking for more members to connect with new congregations in the region. A new Hispanic congregation is forming in the Tri-Cities area, with the pastor, Arturo Crespo wishing to join the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). At the team's last meeting, representatives from Korean Christian Church were interviewed.
- **Outdoor Ministry.** Co-chairs David Helseth and John Williams reported that camp attendance dropped to 151 in 2008 from the 160 attendance in 2007. At this point, it appears that the program did not lose any money in 2008. The team is planning a camp summit on November 15 at Englewood Christian Church in Yakima to discuss the direction of the region's outdoor ministry. The team is asking for ideas from interested persons.
- **Regional Youth Commission.** The commission, including new adult sponsor, Aaron Pinkston from Bellingham, will meet November 21-23, January 9-11 and February 20-22 to plan regional youth events. Among these will be retreats for Chi Rho on March 6-8 and Christian Youth Fellowship, March 27-29. These are new dates. Board members were encouraged to get youth to these self-funded retreats.
- **Turner Lectures.** The dates for the 2009 event are October 5-7 in Yakima, with the "Three Interfaith Amigos" to be the presenters. They will speak on their intentional interfaith ministry in Seattle. The fees were raised \$5 for each category of registrant in 2008. Child care also is provided during the lecture series, including the workshop time. Lay people and clergy are encouraged to participate.
- **Washington Association of Churches.** The association appears to be operating as "status quo" after reorganizing. It was expected that something new would be created, but that did not happen. This Seattle-centric group is asking for \$6000 from the Northwest Regional Christian Church next year. That amount is not being considered in the regional 2009 budget.
- **Conflict of Interest Questionnaires.** These forms were distributed and signed by board members.

2. REGIONAL MINISTER'S REPORT

Rebecca suggested that board members report to the congregations. She spoke about the “generosity of spirit” that exists within the region and the deep joy that brings her. She highlighted and updated the board on various programs, including:

- **Turner Lectures.** Approximately 90 people attended the event. The worship, fellowship, lectures and workshops were inspiring. She noted that 15 people attended the workshop on the region and its life.
- **Moses Lake.** The bank handling the sale of the former Moses Lake Christian Church reports it expects to complete the transaction by the end of next week.
- **Week of Compassion.** Rebecca attended the Week of Compassion meeting at which Amy Gopp was named the new executive director.
- **University Christian Church.** The Seattle congregation is the new home to the homeless encampment dubbed “Nicklesville” after the Seattle mayor. The homeless have been given 72 hours in which to vacate the property. Federal law overrides the city/state law. Prayers were asked for the congregation. A letter will be sent to the congregation.
- **UCC Conference Board.** Monica Myers Greenberg has been approved to be the Disciples’ representative on the conference board. The UCC conference will name someone to region’s board.
- **New Church Companions Team.** Rod Smith has had to step aside from chairing the team. Christy Bristow and Sarasopa Enari were suggested as co-chairs.
- **New Hispanic Congregation.** A document was distributed concerning the new congregation in the Tri-Cities area.
- **Division of Overseas Ministries.** Rebecca has been invited to join other regional ministers who will be visiting Haiti and the Dominican Republic in February 2009. Most of the cost of the trip will be covered by DOM. The air fare to and from Miami is the regional cost. The experience may help move the region to becoming a Global Mission Region.
- **Faith Advocacy Day.** The region was asked to name a representative to the planning committee for Faith Advocacy Day which will be held March 17 in Olympia. Kathy Coggins, director of the Disciples Peace Fellowship who recently moved to Seattle, was asked to serve on our behalf.
- **Commission on Ministries in Higher Education.** Rebecca reported that a second Disciples of Christ representative is needed to join Alberta Hill on the commission.
- **Filing System.** Amber Saladino and Rebecca have completed the reorganization of the office, including integration of all files into one system. Congregational and clergy files have been updated. Archival material has been sent to the Disciples of Christ Historical Society.
- **Prayers.** Rebecca asked that the board pray for congregations in the search and call process in Spokane, Anchorage and Othello; Carol Rawlings and Janetta Cravens Boyd on their installations; the New Beginnings congregations and pastors; RISE process and design teams; Yakama Christian Mission and University Christian Church.

Prayers also were asked for new pastors in the region: Kathy Coggins, John Loucks and Stephen Johnson as well as for Rochelle Richards on the birth of her daughter, Lois and Ron Yates, Bob and Berlina Brock, Rod and Janice Smith regarding health problems; and Verginia Aylesworth on the death of her husband.

3. INCOME DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Bill Jennison reported on the program to raise gifts from individuals to support the regional budget. The goal of the annual fund, Connecting in Mission, is \$15,000 for 2008. To date, the project has raised nearly \$12,000 in gifts and pledges. The planning group needs someone to help with promotion of the program. Other suggestions include promoting Disciples Mission Fund and special funds and holding regional events on responsible and faithful use of dollars for pastors and stewardship people and a workshop on estate planning.

4. REGIONAL MINISTER SEARCH

Cherilyn reported that seven or eight people have sent in their papers. None of the names will be known until after initial screening by a third party. Candidates will be vetted for qualifications by someone outside the region before they go to the interview process.

5. ANTI-RACISM

Rebecca reported that the anti-racism team will meet with April Johnson, new director of the denominational program.

The session ended with David Moffitt, vice-moderator of the board, leading the board in the evening prayer. The morning devotions around spiritual growth were led by Debbie Little.

6. BUDGET

Debbie Jennison presented the board with the proposed 2009 budget, emphasizing salary needs for staff. She outlined the need to increase the salary package of the regional minister to make it more attractive to potential candidates for the position now in the search and call process. Most regional ministers receive \$80,000, while Rebecca receives \$66,435. Money for medical expenses for the regional minister and for Amber will need to be raised.

Debbie stressed the need to raise giving to the Disciples Mission Fund. For every dollar going to DMF, 67 percent comes to the region. One hundred percent of the Christmas offering comes to the region. Congregations will be asked to increase their Christmas offerings.

The session was concluded with a prayer led by Lauri Clark Strait. After the break, Lillian Moir led the board in devotions and prayer.

7. BUDGET DISCUSSION CONTINUES

Debbie reported that a \$4,000 challenge gift had been given anonymously to raise salaries. This would be a one-time fix. Money would need to be found to continue the salaries at the new rate.

The sale of the property at Moses Lake could yield around \$75,000. After lengthy discussion, the board:

- **AGREED** to launch an education campaign regarding salary increases.
- **VOTED** unanimously to increase the salaries of Amber Saladino and Larry Moorman by six percent for 2009 and set regional minister's base salary at \$75,000 for 2009. Moved by Gary Shoemaker and seconded by Ronna Smith.
- **VOTED** unanimously to accept the budget for 2009 with the new numbers. Moved by Dixie Carringer and seconded by Sophie Rice-Sauer and David Moffitt.

The morning session was closed with prayer by Cherilyn.

8. MOSES LAKE MONEY

Discussion centered around how to use the money. Among the suggestions were to allocate \$50,000 for special projects related to moving the new regional minister, giving a "thank you" gift to the office of the Disciples' general minister and president for its support in the regional minister search process, paying off the loan for the regional minister's car and outreach. The remaining \$25,000 could be used for a mission trip, vehicle replacement fund, regional assembly, camp scholarships and Global Ministries' special projects such as Zimbabwe, Bolenge Hospital and Haiti. No final decisions were made.

9. DATES

The 2009 meeting dates for the regional board will be February 28, either face-to-face or as a conference call; May 16, September 12 and November 7.

10. NEW CONGREGATIONS

- **VOTED** unanimously to appoint Christy Bristow and Sarasopa Enari to serve as co-chairs of the New Congregations Companion Team. Christy has agreed and Sopa needs to be asked if he will serve. Moved by Dalene Vasbinder and seconded by Barbara Reynolds.
- **VOTED** unanimously to approve recognition of Ciudad de Dios Iglesia, a congregation-information under the leadership of Arturo and Arcelia Crespo, pending their approval for licensing by the Commission on the Ministry. Moved by Debbie Little and seconded by Debbie Jennison.
- **VOTED** unanimously to support Ciudad de Dios with \$1000 monthly in 2009, for a total of \$12,000. Funds are to be used to secure facilities and for other start-up expenses, not salaries. These funds will be withdrawn from the New Church Fund.

11. RISE

Rebecca reported that teams are exploring how the region might be shaped for the next five to ten years. The writing team of Wahab Baldwin, Sandy Messick and Laura Reed will meet on November 1 to begin writing. A special assembly will be held in May to approve the document.

12. MISSION ALIGNMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL

Cherilyn reported on the general church process of restructuring. This is similar to what the Northwest Regional Christian Church is doing. The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has not been used well. With the loss of congregations, the structure has become too large to maintain. Some current units are being considered for merging, such as Disciples Home Missions and Higher Education and Leadership Ministry. The major improvement being suggested by the committee is to bring the ethnic ministries (Hispanic, Asian and African-American) into a closer relationship with the general minister and president, both pastorally and administratively. Models are on the general church web site. Suggestions may be sent there. The council will meet November 20-22 in Dallas to continue its work.

13. REPORTS

The board voted unanimously to receive the reports of the various committees, commissions and task groups. Moved by Jim Harwood and seconded by Dalene Vasbinder.

14. CLOSING WORSHIP

Rebecca led the board in worship, including communion. She also thanked Jim Harwood and the congregation of United Christian Church for its hospitality, the people who participated in the meeting and for their attention to the budget and the mission of the region.

Submitted by
Lillian Moir, board secretary