

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES
Leadership Team Meeting
May 27, 2009

Meeting Place: Augustana Lutheran Church, 6th and Oak Streets, Andover, IL

Attendance: Bishop Gary Wollersheim, Very Rev. Robert Flannery, Rev Dr. John Charlton III, Rev Terry Clark, Rev. Linda Harrod, Rev. Catiana McKay, Rev. Robert Pearson, Rev. Robert Sherman, Mrs. Marianne Stowers, Mrs. Andrea Wilson

Worship: led by Bob Sherman in Augustana's sanctuary

Called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Bishop Wollersheim

Agenda: approved as presented, no changes

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The February 17, 2009 minutes were accepted as printed

Financial Reports:

The Schedule 2 financial report was reviewed. The end of 2008 report shows receipts down from the previous year. We had to go into reserves, but we do have reserves. Actual status would be helpful since this schedule is a bit difficult to understand. A balance sheet would be helpful. Team members asked for financial reports early as well as agenda and minutes.

\$81,000 was pledged by judicatories for 2008; \$75,000 was received. 2009 pledges are quite a bit less. Getting less money pledged and less percentage received has been a pattern for several years. We don't have many pledges for 2010.

Budget for 2010. It is hard to determine the budget for next year. We said we would look at it now. Andrea commented the 2010 budget would have to be reduced substantially, and the only way she could see to do that was for her to take a salary cut. General discussion followed about how to increase income. We noted the additional info provided to our judicatories about how our finances are used has not increased pledges. Can we have a brochure to spell out ICC ministry? Have it on line, and send printed copies to each judicatory, and encourage them to let their members know about the website. Hopefully individual church members will learn more about the ICC. People don't support what they don't know anything about. Bishop Gary suggests telephone contact with each judicatory from ICC staff or from leadership team contacting their judicatory leader.

Contact all, not just those who haven't responded well. We should also include public policy issues, especially since there has been lots of activity this year. Each judicatory has its own issues, and then there is the economy's effect. Ecumenical ministry has not been a priority among our congregations for several years. We need to keep the fires going until people come back to working together with the Body of Christ.

As a team we need to figure out what we want to say/ present. Andrea feels she can give a shot at brochure creation. Terry knows someone in that area who may be able to

help in graphics. A draft for leadership team review would be helpful; some folks are good at ideas, while others are good at tweaking --we need it all.

This suggested process may work best for 2011 says Andrea, but for 2010 we better lower the budget. The ICC team decided to meet physically instead of by telephone in September. The meeting will be September 1, 2009, hopefully at the United Methodist Center in Springfield. The team would like a visit from the accountant at the September 1st meeting. We need to have a format that shows operating gains or losses for a year exclusive of unrealized gains or losses from investments.

We reviewed possible pledges from judicatories for 2010. --who has and who hasn't. We noted the ICC gives member churches a regular forum to be together. It's important to keep that.

Reference the budget - the Treasurer will meet with staff and present at the September 1st meeting. We did not address it today.

Team Reports:

ICER --should make sure they have someone at the leadership team. We really want and need them here. They wanted to be on this team. If one of the co-chairs can't come another team member would welcome. Bob Flannery will call their leadership to communicate our need for their input. Some judicatories have strong anti-racism programs. Maybe that's why ICER team not called upon. It would be good that various communions have a rep from their racism team on ICER. Not for competition for but for increased resources for Christians in Illinois to do the job.

Public Policy Team Linda presented. They have had successful meetings with several legislators. ICC has been identified as interested party in several hearings. The state is doing a study on the real costs of the death penalty convictions vs. life without parole. There is hope an anti-death penalty bill could see the light in the months ahead, especially if their study concludes life sentence is cheaper than all costs associated with a death penalty as has been shown in other studies. Andrea is staffing the movement for the ICC. She is on their anti-death penalty commitment list personally, but they know she comes with her "attachments". Motion was made and passed by acclaim to authorize Andrea to be our official representative to their committees. It was a great introductory event when Gary McCants showed people around the Capitol. We want to write a letter to the Governor in appreciation for the Prayer Breakfast, and to thank him for his work for Illinois. We will try again to get a date to meet with the Governor.

We are making progress on e-mail lists as to who is the best point of contact in each judicatory for the ICC. Suggest we send editorial comments to the media about issues of concern.

Forum team Speakers: the Rev. Denver Bitner, Executive Director, Lutheran Social Service, Anne Wachal, Social Worker, Program Manager for Churches United of the Quad Cities Area, and Rev. Kenneth Board, Rockford, Pilgrim Baptist Church (ABC.) Our suggested theme: Christ's Church with persons who are poor. Handouts on other ministries may be available. We will use the same format as last year. Dove ministry mentioned --if we could get an African American or Hispanic to present. DOVE

is an acronym, but no one knew what it stands for. We hope to get a presentation on rural ministry, which would be a fourth speaker. We want to give more time to each presenter than last year based on feedback.

If we do 4 presentations, then each goes down to 10 minutes. Some Leadership Team suggestions: cut greet time 10 minutes, cut lunch 10-15 minutes. Schedule worship time 45 minutes including time in out of worship space. Invite local judicatories leaders and local laypersons to attend the worship. Push as we can. May be not many will come, but the word gets out. Invite the local newspaper religious reporter to cover the event.

Schedule (4 speakers): 9:20 – 10:00 Worship, 10:15 – 12:00 Forum, Noon Lunch, 12:45 – 1:30 Table Reports

Bi-State Annual Gathering:

Cynthia's mom ill-so she can't be here. Bob F reports. March 19-20, 2010. He will be local contact. (More on the Gathering later)

Annual Assembly:

Catiana will contact Bishop Palmer to share the theme and suggested sermon length. He chooses scripture. Bishop Palmer is president of the Council of Bishops for the United Methodist church. Catiana is in touch with host pastor in Joliet. Andrea will coordinate with Catiana to provide data on needs. Invite Joliet clergy group to attend.

2010: Bob Sherman has not had good luck in contacting Grace Imathieu- defer her invitation to 2011 or later. So who for 2010?

Nominations for election at the Assembly:

We don't have Presbyterian or Episcopalians on the Leadership Team.

Judicatory leader possibles:

Sheldon Culver, United Church of Christ, Illinois, South

Bishop from Joliet?

Auxilliary from Chicago?

Orthodox?

Sue Krummel, PCUSA, Great Rivers

Janis West, PCUSA, Southeastern Illinois

New Episcopal bishop from Chicago, Jeffery Lee - Bishop Wollersheim will contact him

In previous minutes-do we have more accurate of terms lengths by name, and when original Leadership Team terms were extended? [Leadership team minutes of June 5, 2007 contain a motion to be presented to 2007 Assembly to extend everyone's term by one year – I have nothing more specific on my computer; hopefully Andrea's files are in better shape than mine!]

Bi-Annual Gathering: starts Friday afternoon March 19, 2010; ends after lunch on Saturday at Our Lady of the Snows Retreat Center, [Belleville, IL]. The Leadership Team discussed this issue as a Committee of the Whole, since no presenter/report was available. Possible bus ride to East St Louis to an ongoing ministry. Lesslie Bates

Neighborhood House in East St Louis. Catholic Urban Programs too. Do a ministry together with those already doing something? We need to avoid “the zoo effect.” Also we need to consider our coming can add a great burden to the servicing agency.

A purpose of the gathering is to bring back specific skills, topics for congregations – visit in that area and learn how to bring that skill back to home congregation.

Maybe it would be better to ask the ministry provider to come to the gathering and present – yet still provide the special gifts, or financial support (Bob Flannery and Terry Clark will meet with ministry leaders)

Field trip for those who might want to do something after the scheduled event is over? Then it would be a totally volunteer event. Arrange early enough so it can be part of our publicity as originally sent out.

It would helpful to find a way for people coming to experience those who don't have much of anything and then bringing that awareness home.

Immigration issues? Whatever we did the first day, we can process what we experienced that same night, or the next morning. This would preclude the Saturday afternoon option.

We discussed what would cause a pastor to attend? We don't know how to relate to people who are of lower income than we are (Terry). Urban and rural. Annual assembly paints big picture; how its addressed in detail would be at statewide gathering.

Should be a church ministry – not an agency or government. Possible theme: Seeing with new eyes: how to do ministry together with persons who are living in poverty [see additional possibilities below]

Moving from our safety zones into our fear zones. It's doing with others. It's conversation with, we are learning from them. It's a two way street. What is practical way to do it? Where can we be engaged? Ask folks on the scene as to how we can be of help. We do conversation at their place with people they are serving. No just those who are doing, but those who are receiving.

Tables seating possibility: those who are receiving talking to those who want to learn. Clients should exceed listeners so clients are not intimidated. Again helping us move from safety zone to fear zone – the margin of grace. Facilitator at each table would be helpful, but must truly facilitate not dominate. There is another way of being with people rather than just doing for them. Bishop figures it's a good idea, but can it be pulled off? We need to contact people who are doing ministry in East St Louis and see what can be worked out.

Encourage people to do some reading before they come. Bible study. American Bible Society handouts. Some kind of preparation encouraged. Bible study each of the two mornings, related to the theme.

We need to touch base with the bi-annual gathering committee as to what we're suggesting, where does she (they) want to go from here. Time is limited so this has to be done fast.

Awards can be done the next time, if there isn't time. Service awards can be to persons, or to groups. Or the award could be given at breakfast time, although lunch may be better because it's a continental breakfast.

Ask judicatory leaders for suggested recipients – with a “not later than” date? And/or have nomination forms at the assembly?

The award is for outstanding ecumenical work. We'll be doing this at the assembly, would appreciate input judicatory head or her or his representative. Not limited to one nomination. Who will do this? Bob Sherman will work it, and coordinate with whoever is necessary.

Publicity: brochure, flyer at annual assembly. Start at one p.m for half hour for briefing of how to. Opening experience could be a Bible study. Emphasize why we are doing this. A good speaker/preacher from a small congregation to present ministry in the rural scene? Possible speakers: Pastor Garcia, UM clergy, El Senor, Cobden, IL. Rural and immigrants.

Take time on Saturday to process what happened on Friday night. Reflection session then the presentation and then lunch and then awards. Any special use of the physical setting, which includes the hotel, church, and visitor's center? Grounds are beautiful. Need to allow time to see/reflect.

Possible themes: "Seeing with new eyes: ministry with persons who are living in poverty." "Another way of being: Christ and serving others." Seeing with new eyes: persons who are poor teaching us"

Newsletter reminders: articles are due end of June. Catiana is doing one. Bob Flannery is doing article about Sister Joan's award. Cynthia was doing ecumenism from her perspective. Public policy updates. It will include Annual Assembly info as available.

Oct 1, 2009 Old St Patrick's church in Chicago, 6:30 pm 10th anniversary of Joint Declaration Documentation on Justification between Catholics and Lutherans.

Meet next Sept 1, 2009, 9 am -3:30 pm, United Methodist Center in Springfield.

Adjourned 1455, and prayed the Lord's Prayer together.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Pearson, Secretary