

Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism

Wednesday, October 3 – Saturday, October 6, 2007

Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA

Minutes

Action Steps:

1. Thanks to the following, on GC stationery (drafted by group, sent by Stephanie)
 - Thomas Pang and Chinese Ministry, with cc to Bishop (Charles)
 - David Urion and Maggie Geller (Joanne)
 - SSJE (Ora)
 - EDS (Silito)
 - The Crossing (Lallie)
2. Copy of Chinese Ministry's new church plant presentation (Stephanie)
3. Draft Mid-triennium report: Beth, Jim, Joanne and Lallie (to be discussed in January/February conference call)
4. Work to reduce GC Resolutions load by ½. Emphasize stories, transformation and community.
 - Need to build relationships and heal.
 - Need to get serious about decline, transformation.
 - Need to actually present a reasonable workload, realistic about what we can get done.
 - Need to open space for greater, more inclusive participation – small groups, plenaries based on stories.
 - Need to facilitate translation, slow down the process.

Five groups w/ power that we could approach in order to argue for 50% reduction in resolutions workload.

- Jim: House of Bishops
 - Lallie: Greg Straub and CCAB chairs
 - Ted: Executive Council
 - Colenzo: Bonnie Anderson and CCAB liaisons
 - Charles: 815 Staff
5. Lallie
 - a. speak with Bonnie re: workload, coming report
 - b. set appt. for Lallie and Silito to meet with PB Katharine
 - c. follow up on resolutions assigned to us
 6. Charles will forward info to Lallie (who will forward to all) on scenario planning
 7. Ted will take scenarios to Congregations in Ministry Committee of EC, with hope that this will lead to the Council spending a day studying the scenarios at its June 13-15 Albuquerque meeting.
 8. Charles or Ted will forward Jim Lemler's strategic planning doc.
 9. Set conference call date (via email)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3

Present: Angelica Duque, Charles Fulton, Ora Houston, Colenzo Hubbard, David Jones (departed Thursday evening to attend funeral), Lallie Lloyd, Jim Mathes, Don McClain, Ted Mollegen, Kirsten Nielsen, Joanne O'Donnell, Beth Panilaitis, Silito Romero, Stephanie Spellers, Sandye Wilson

Not present: LeeAnne Kosovich, Franklin Brookhart

EVENING

Lallie convened group at 8:20 p.m. 1:1s on "What brought you here?"

David Jones shared insights from recent New Orleans Bishops' meeting. Unanimity and collaboration. International awareness as well as honor for our gay and lesbian members and leaders. Strong leadership from P.B. Katharine.

Jim Mathes shared re: Walking to Emmaus Consultation in Spain meeting – American bishops in missionary relationships, meeting with African partner bishops. Trinity Wall Street convened. Goal: to build relationships, knowledge about each other. Even arch-conservative African primates came seeking relationships – these connections will hold us together, will win the day over the long haul.

Homework: Read through 6 scenarios (distributed at meeting, no electronic copy included). Presented by Charles F and Ted M, who worked with other congregational dev experts to develop 6 specific pictures of Episcopal Church in 2017, given particular, current trajectories. Think of them as "forecasts." See attached doc by Joseph Coates (*SCDME_Boston_ScenarioPlanning_10.07*) for info about scenario planning. See pp. 9-10 of minutes for small group reactions to the scenarios (actually discussed in detail on Friday afternoon).

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4

MORNING

Group attended Community Eucharist at EDS. Lallie convened meeting at 10:05 a.m., with review of agenda. Bishop Steven Charleston (ret. Alaska), President and Dean of EDS, will join us.

Where are we?

Boston, we will spend a lot of time listening and learning.

April 23-26, 2008: Los Angeles – more listening and learning; other tasks as appointed.

October 1-4, 2008: Phoenix, Arizona – writing Blue Book Report

Lallie: How do we stop seeing mission and evangelism as opposites, but instead supporting one another? What would it take for moderate to progressive Episcopalians plant churches, get viable and vital? In report, describe what we see and know.

Silito: Be sure to address vocations and growth, new leaders for all these new ministries.

Group brainstormed queries to pose to Steven Charleston:

- Why the decline in enrollment? Bishops don't have jobs for new priests, so they're not putting people into process and seminary EVEN THOUGH we're moving toward a priest shortage.
- Old wineskins/new wineskins: How are you reinventing yourself, and still maintaining the institution? Note: we often fail b/c we're pouring new wine into old wineskins.
- What mission are you preparing students for? How does it fit with the operative mission of the wider church?
- Who has access to seminary – see financial strain, etc.
- Note: Overhead so high, need a certain # of students to survive. Why not decrease overhead and then do some amazing work with the students you've got?

Church's Purpose

1:1s talking through: "God's love is real to me b/c or when my congregation ..."

keywords: giving, vulnerability, alive, present, broken, discrimination, caring, transformation, equipping, relationships, joyful, experiencing spirit, change agent

- Charles F reflected on Solomon's Porch in Minnesota. Greeter asked, "What brought you here?" Later, told him: "We believe when someone walks in the door, God is doing something in their life and God brought them here to give us something and we're here to give them something, and that mutual, holy exchange keeps us going."
- Silito R: Look at the mutual needs – what folks offer, what church offers – not just what we need from people. Holy exchange.
- Joanne O: God is active in all of life. Church is where I most powerfully, explicitly discover God active – attunement, can see God more clearly.
- Colenzo H: Great Commandment, Great Commission. Responding to the love of Christ that is in us by sharing that love, making disciples. Church equips people.
- David J: The body of Christ in the world. Recklessly giving ourselves away. I care for you just b/c you are beloved.
- Jim M: Decoding the message. How do we translate?
- Ora H: Jesus was an activist. I'm still looking for that Jesus figure to stand against injustice. Why so comfortable?
- Jim M: How do we balance prophetic witness and institutional realities? To be truly inclusive, do we include those who cannot abide by our inclusivity?
- Beth P: A facilitator for spiritual transformation. Aware of what people in your area need for spiritual transformation. Meeting them.
- Charles F: Can't institutionalize prophecy. Prophets on edge, one outside calling and challenging the ones inside. Challenging core values.
- David J: Sometimes prophecy is a word from God, and it's a yes, not a no. MISSION: heart changes when stand in lower 9th ward of New Orleans. Opportunity to experience poverty, injustice. Abiding with. Being touched.
- Colenzo H: Pay attention to the evangelical voices, too. Feel systemically pushed out.
- Ora H: Love help bridging the gap.
- Sandye W: Allowed "other side" to take away language of invitation, Jesus, love. Afraid to use the language. Undermines our ability to be evangelical, end up speaking in sociological terms, lose the God talk. Conserve what has been passed on to us re: a living relationship with Jesus Christ, but in light of liberation, the cross, justice.

- Charles F: Why don't we see the passion of conservative church planters in more moderate forms? Their view of atonement: must be saved, conversion changed everything. My view: God is loving, so patient, forbearing, giving.
- What if we became the church that marries evangelicalism and justice? (See Scenario 5). Church where social activists are able to name the activity of and relationship with God. Evangelicals rooted in tradition, conversation, multiplicity of truths.
- Stephanie S: We need each other. I need to be with people who have a vibrant, unabashed love affair with Jesus. I hope they discover something in my way of including and welcoming all people. True individually. True as a wider church.
- Colenzo H: Mission is evangelism. Doing the work – feeding hungry – b/c we are the body of Christ, serving in his name. Say so!
- Jim M: We're a deist church. How recover Jesus? Maybe a few people are ahead of the rest (on recovering Jesus), and that's why it feels like a conflict.
- Beth P: So polarized. Us and Them. Actually, it's always giving and receiving.
- Ora H: Fear is driving so much of the animosity. What we've loved is being transformed. Don't open up and welcome it, instead get narrow.
- Joanne O: We're wired for reactivity, but we're not stuck with it.

AFTERNOON

Conversation with Steven Charleston

Seminaries and decline and change. Role of theological education in the national strategy of the church. Ironic situation. We value learned clergy, but give almost no national support to seminaries. Still, figuring out how to face the financial problems creatively. Not a bailout, not homogenize into lowest common denominator. National strategy: what do we see as the future and mission of our denomination and how does education support it?

Different look at scholarship funds, relieve debt. Allow schools to merge or adapt.

[Any roadblocks that need to be removed, open doors and enhance enrollment?]

Common ground on ordination processes. How can seminarians afford to go to seminary? More Episcopalians going to non-Episcopal schools than ever. Why? High cost of seminary. Distance. What does that mean for our unique Episcopal identity and leadership in future? How respond? Technology, attend longer, site visits to get community – hybrid model. New vision of formation: partnership b/t sponsoring diocese and seminary.

[What would be helpful legislatively, to enhance cooperation b/t seminaries and dioceses?]

Reduce cost. Distance learning. Talk to PB about other legislation. Infrastructure issue: old buildings, high overhead – can't be a small college campus. Can't fight the debt problem alone.

[Most congregations face same dilemma: old buildings, few people]

A question of renewal for the church, spiritual renewal. Tell the people what's really going on – yes, there's debt; no, we're not supporting church the way we used to. Need a unified vision, energized by the Spirit of God, not doom and gloom. No time to sit and cry. Do something new in this century. Moment will pass.

[How do we craft the new wineskins?]

Talk about formation and education in a new way. Base Christian community model of education in the church. Dismantle some assumptions about relationships b/t faculty, staff and students, plus dioceses. Community as one cohesive, comprehensive whole. Commuterism is here to stay – how create a new way of formative community, change way we eat and worship.

[Relationality is the key?]

Ideology will not tear us apart. Gather at the table. Be human together. We should be the ones who model the way people come together. EDS approach: Welcome conservatives, maybe they'll learn from us and we'll learn something from them, too. No extremes. Via media.

[Final thoughts?]

Training people to be bi-vocational, versatile leaders for the future. Skills usable in a variety of contexts, licensed counselors. Might end up serving the 75-member congregation ½ time.

Endowment strategy: less and less endowment-driven. Partnerships that reduce overhead and make endowment money go further. Aggressive endowment vision.

Whatever happened to 2020?/What's the word we need to bring to the church now?

Brainstorm:

- Rooted in fear and avoidance – need more people to pay the bills
- Top-down/middle-down instead of bottom-up. No buy in from congregations.
- Former chair and others with horsepower stepped down, out of picture.
- Last time could sit together was at Camp Allen, talking mission. Then split.
- Jim Lemler was chair in 1997, then John Gurnsey from Virginia in 2000, Sarah Lawton in 2003.
- Lot of energy around 2020 and theological education.
- Tried to get a new result out of an old purpose. Old wineskins. Want a transformation w/o changing the people (or vice versa). Underestimated the difficulty of that change.
- Was there one thing about 2020 that helped or touched real people in the pews, or even in a congregation? Yes: faith-sharing.
- Top leaders didn't get it, so people who were waiting for a leading voice never heard it. When a leader gets it, then the system opens up.
- Frustrated with structure, framework. How communicate in old framework? How make change? Maybe our role as a standing commission has to change. Something radical has to happen – only Scenario 1 keeps us the same.
- There ARE dioceses forging new wineskins. Northern Michigan is redefining priesthood. Experimentation is happening.
- Is 2020 dead? Decade of evangelism gave birth to 2020. Talking multicultural, youth and young adult. Can't just let it die. Say what happened – the good and the bad. Imagine if we admitted that we tried something, learned some, failed at other parts.
- Not ready to bury it yet. Church planting initiatives just starting, and they're a result of 2020.
- Got to get out of box!

Do we have enough content to bring to Exec. Council? Mid-triennium report?

Issued "Ring the Bell" last triennium. Now we have the numbers to prove it. We're on a trajectory that's negative, declining; time to reverse course, dramatically. Yes, we've been

through hell, but now the basic tenets of Anglicanism are showing clearly, and they're holding us together. A new consensus is emerging and it's positive. How do we take our authenticity and run with it? Take the 5 scenarios and run with them. Could we get Executive Council engaged? Report in June 2008?

2020: What have we learned? (Not, what did it accomplish?)

Why not propose a scenario? Our imagination of what could be. Then start talking new wineskins. Use a professional scenario planner. Do it in L.A. – 24 hours. (*eventually said no*)

Major institutions are all in same position: cost of medical, land, personnel. How break into new paradigms?

Small groups discussed scenarios for future of Episcopal Church: What do you like, what engages or attracts you? Where do you see God's mission in this scenario? What choices were made that got them there? What would you recommend doing differently?

EVENING

Young Adult Ministry in DioMass

Visit to St. Paul's Cathedral, met with Bishop Tom Shaw and young adult ministry leaders: Patrick Gray, Church of the Advent, Boston – Theology on Tap
Leslie Sterling, All Saints-Brookline – Episcopal Evening
Liane Marquis, Boston College Graduate Protestant Chaplaincy – The Gathering
Lynn Campbell, Young Adult Ministry Project Coordinator & The Crossing

Discussion of young adult ministry strategies in diocese, inc. grant from Trinity Wall Street to plant relational evangelists in key congregations and chaplaincies in Boston (which has 2nd highest concentration of young adults of any American city). Bishop has established young adult ministries as a priority, with aggressive fundraising and research to fund church plants, program budgets, creative ministries in a variety of contexts (not just the college/young professional crowd).

Group then attended The Crossing, the emerging church worship community at St. Paul's Cathedral.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 05

MORNING

Jubilee Ministry in Diocese of Massachusetts

Lallie L introduced Maggie Geller and David Urion, leaders in Diocese of Massachusetts' Jubilee Ministry, the effort to address world mission, relief of extreme poverty in Africa. Part of diocesan Mission Strategy, and part of responding to Millennium Development Goals. Congregations really commit to this ministry. Makes a difference in congregational life, spiritual formation of communities and individuals. [Note: NOT part of the Jubilee Centers, a justice ministry within ECUSA. Jubilee.]

David U: “I’m sure, when we all get to heaven, we’ll discuss the theological questions of the late 20th and early 21st century. Right now, there are some of our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ who have needs we can fill.”

Jubilee Committee Mission:

- Ubuntu: A person with ubuntu is open and available to others. I am because you are. (South African theology)
- Diocesan committee, not separately incorporated.
- Partner with people on the ground in Africa (going where we’re welcome, keeping relationships w/o flaring Communion tensions), first ask “What do you need?”
- Caring for people suffering from AIDS epidemic, realizing link with poverty (bread winners are dying out, children and elderly are the survivors)
- Support congregations in engaging in mission opportunities and developing partnerships; parish visits to share info, impress the specifics of the problem, help congregations to figure out how to respond to the extraordinary suffering
- Receive .7% of diocesan budget (response to MDGs, a commitment before Nat’l Church made it – that resolution actually came out of MA), plus individual and parish support
- Recruiting new doctors to work ½ at Children’s Hospital and ½ in Maseno

How is the diocese responding/supporting?

- Bishop has deployed two vocational deacons to support mission: Maggie Geller as Deacon for AIDS in Africa Education and Advocacy, Ted Gaiser as Deacon for Congregational Partnerships for Mission. Training diocesan reps who can lead mission trips.
- One deanery has created an annual fundraising walk. Gives entire deanery a common mission. Raised 10s of thousands of dollars for Jubilee.
- Members of local churches, including children, holding their own creative fundraisers.
- Bishops and church leaders make regular visits, stay inspired and connected in order to inspire others.
- Jubilee has small resources, but allows people to be invigorated, enabled and called.

Difference in one parish

David Urion discussed how Jubilee has transformed St. Anne’s in the Fields-Lincoln, a comfortable and affluent parish. Mission Strategy inspired real growth in parishioners’ hearts, standing in solidarity w/ poor and suffering neighbors. Parish experiences growth b/c of excitement around mission – people say that’s why they come to this church.

- Members in new, mutual relationships w/ other congregations in diocese, esp. in downtown Boston afterschool and anti-violence programs.
- Sister parish in Maseno, Kenya
- Parish devotes .7% budget to Jubilee, and parishioners have also committed from household budgets.

David is also a doctor at Children’s Hospital and director of Overseas Program at Harvard Medical School. Pairing seminarians and medical students to go on projects in Africa together.

Questions

[Given that our church is in a time of decline, where are the instances of new life that we can witness to?] St. Anne's has vibrant youth group, mission trips in response to Katrina, local programs, Central America. Young people dragging the rest into 21st century and mission.

[Train volunteers in cultural issues?] A module in the Mission Leadership Training Program. Anyone engaged in mission from St. Anne's is strongly encouraged to go to anti-racism training.

[Diocesan penetration?] Introduced Jubilee curriculum at Diocesan Convention. Then sent to all congregations and encouraged them to use during Epiphany – common curriculum and journey for entire diocese. Learning about Africa, mission, serving body of Christ. Spiritual formation.

[Could Roanridge Trust funds kick in?] Several hundred thousand dollars a year, mostly to rural & small churches. Training leaders who are developing sensitivity to rural areas, perhaps globally?

AFTERNOON

Our Commission Goals

- Raise key issues, inc. decline. We're worried that top leaders want data but reject anything that's not a "good story." Can we do the think-tank work for PB, knowing she's in the field, building the relationships and getting to know the church as a new PB, and doesn't have time for putting together a major strategy on growth? Don't see an emphasis on evangelism, church-planting, but maybe it's unrealistic to expect it right now.
- **Interim report to Exec Council is a good thing, but sitting down with PB is the real coup.** Be part of the learning and connecting that she's doing right now. What would we say? **Who would we bring? What can we say to PB, then to Exec Council?**
 - Decline numbers – we've done one Blue Book Report, but need to reiterate. Why the decline? Make it plain. Given crisis, must go outside of the box.
 - Preach the bad news (above) and then preach the good news. Provide solutions. Draw a picture. Move to scenarios. Read #1 first, what happens if we stay on the current track. Then perhaps 2 more, enough to have perspective, not so many that we overwhelm. 3 game plans. Help leadership (PB, HOB, 815 Staff, dioceses) to know what the field is and where we need to go. Crucial decisions ahead.
 - Notice the working areas our commission has identified in prior triennia: youth and young adults, formation. Set forth in the context of scenarios, to deliver in a more energetic way.
 - Where are young people and young adults? How do we get them?
 - Where are multicultural communities, dioceses? How do we build them? Note: She started several new congregations in her diocese, most of them with ethnic minority communities.
 - Introduce our Missional Dioceses' work so far.
 - Call meeting of mainline denominations and say "Let's address decline together." Why is it so hard to address decline? Call in best experts.

- Need to have 2 conversations as a church: public conversation is that we're healthy, engaged in mission; internal conversation says we've got work to do, we're in trouble.
- **What's the strategy?**
 - Conversation with PB and with Bonnie Anderson re: decline, strategies. Encourage to have Exec Council do scenario planning w/ a professional, or at least study the ones generated. ** Full conversation with Chuck Robertson, Canon to the Ordinary, so PB has background.
** Go through Bonnie Anderson to get a word into Exec Council.
 - Ted brings to Congregations Committee of Exec Council at next meeting in November. They can recommend that Exec Council do scenario planning OR review the scenarios we've studied. We back it up in our report in June, but we don't have to take lead on scenario planning.
 - Alternate: Meet with Exec Council, share 3 scenarios (which scenarios? We can design them at our L.A. meeting). Help to educate people about the issues and the consequences, identify the alternatives, track and make adjustments as needed. (Present as a drama, not as a document. Written doc has a life of its own.)
 - Present the scenarios, get some conversation going, here's the one we see as preferred future. Exec Council needs to make choices accordingly. Maybe a recommendation to Exec Council that they do scenario planning.
 - Be ready to control story of scenarios w/ press, esp. anti-Episcopal reactionaries.

Comments on Scenarios

#2: The Episcopal Church Claims Place in God's Unfolding Mission

Liked focus on spiritual formation, on empowering the people in the pews to see selves as ministers of the gospel. Really changing wineskins, creating central worship/community action centers rather than more conventional congregations. Like emphasis not just on average Sunday attendance but on actual spiritual growth, baptisms, outreach. Not result of actual choices by G.C., but clearly a priority. More focus on renewal and revival – what if HoB meeting actually a revival, more prayer? Also, actually encourage bishops to create room and energy for creative, indigenous worship. Probably wouldn't happen with a curriculum. Need to have buy-in from PB, bishops, keep flowing down and penetrating. Note: Venture in Mission, PB initiative, started partner relationships with other parts of world, taught dioceses to run a capital funds campaign. Note: would a curriculum actually transform lives?

#3: Recalling Leadership

Reframe bishop's comments. Get buy-in from the people w/ pointy hats and long flowing robes ☺ Hear God in words “transformation,” “abundance,” “spiritual poverty AND physical poverty.” Committed to 3 years of coaching re: transformational leadership. “*Spiritual Revival of the Episcopate: Let It Begin with Me*” (not “*Recall of the ...*” – negative). Bishops create a climate where it's okay to reshape worship. Have service like this morning at monastery and last night at Cathedral – all okay! As on p. 6: keep in touch with disaffected people, lines of communication always open. Formation runs through.

#4: Smaller, Progressive Church

Taking break from conflict might be healthy. Like biblical grounding, “Being God's People, Healing God's World.” But incredibly judgmental and judgmental (CACA – sarcasm not helpful; scenario calls reconciliation “appeasement”). Sweeping out dissidents won't solve

conflict. Loss of 100K relationships is actually painful, not a clinical. Apparent choice: we can do without the conservatives. Question: What's happened to the ones who left? They may be doing great evangelism and mission in their own way. Don't assume God is not working in midst of reckoning with conflict and tension – could be that's a part of our real mission. We can't control what people do when they go, but we can control whether we get unstuck; if you're in a company with incompatible divisions, might sell one off. Note: Scenario writing is a little over-the-top, try to imagine the ideas and path that would lead to the scenario (hence, CACA).

#5: Marriage of Justice and Evangelism

Felt God present in the imagery. Careful with phrases like, “less sophisticated versions of Christian belief ...”. Still value liturgical beauty and sense of wonder, not just justice and evangelism – a 3-fold marriage. Resonances with Education for Ministry, long-term faith formation. Nicodemus Gambit – what's up with this? Like sense of new wineskins, valuing the gifts of the one on the other side instead of shoving aside. But how did they get to this place – scenario hard to grasp, b/c not clear what plans or choices resulted in this scenario. 1st choice: Taught evangelism to social activists and justice to evangelicals. 2nd choice: Acknowledged that there were two wings, and both said what they could teach each other, merit in other side.

#6: Partnership: The Success of Working Together – A 2017 Report

Where is God? People loved one another, mission happening, organizations together. Choices: A focus on mission, esp. in a specific region, emphasis on effectiveness and efficiency. Changes: No mention of Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Europe as partners in Anglican mission. Methodist more likely than Presbyterian for partners (bishops, etc.; not much polity affinity w/ Presbyterians). Cooperating b/t denominations on infrastructure has been on the table for awhile. Must have convened leaders of major mainline denominations beforehand?

Note:

- Education is a key, whether it's on evangelism, justice, etc. Key to bringing it from top-level down.
- Hope of the scenarios: have people buy-in experientially, see alternatives for decision-making around the future of the church, start making choices around the connecting paths (how get to the preferred scenario?). Develop scenarios in various circles, at G.C.? Goal is to get people talking about decline in a problem-solving mode.
- Then able to set a Mission Strategy for the whole church.

EVENING

Meeting with Boston Episcopal Chinese Ministry

[See attachment: SCDME_Boston_AsianMinistry1_10.5.07]

Rev. Thomas Pang, Canon for Asiamerican Ministries, and members of Chinese Ministry Team. Rev. Pang worked in large parishes in Hong Kong. Started work here – 13 people in congregation. Willing to be choir master, chair of every new fellowship – fine!

New church planters need mentors. Send them to a parish with experienced mentor, parish pays some and other body pays rest. Learn how to start and grow church. Asian desk only person taking

care of 100 congregations, made up of many different ethnicities. Need system so that Chinese ministry – east and west – can take care of, network with and effectively support ministries.

Church planting and church growing, different for Asian. Most not Christian. 70-80% baptized by me. How to bring people into the church, other faith or no faith. Leaders come from the youth who started with the ministry.

5 stages of church planting, as applied in Quincy Chinese Center:

1. Meet their needs, build trust in the community, have people rely on us
 - parents serious about children's education, so we help them to achieve
 - youth development, language acquisition, develop civic culture/help to acclimate to U.S. culture, public awareness of community needs and development, register to vote, environmental education
 - Uplift Afterschool Program
2. Start faith-based programs, fellowships, bible study
3. Start a youth service/fellowship
 - Music, powerpoint
4. Start a ministry/church, provide with pastoral care, training for leaders, deepen faith
5. Collaborate with parish, hosting joint church events and services

General conversation:

- Applies to Latino, etc. – realistic for development of other ethnic communities.
- Annual conference of Asian Ministries. Time is brief. Church Leadership Retreat, held in LA. Publishing a newsletter.
- Started a 501c3 nonprofit, not just a church. Means we can get funding for social programs. People pay tuition for programs. Partner with parishes, support from that corner (low rent). Financial support: grants from state to offer social programs in community. Advocacy for poor and disabled people. We partner with organizations that provide funds, while we provide a site, a bridge, w/ our relationships.
- St. Chrysostom and Chinese Ministry working together on voter registration – sponsoring a bilingual candidates' forum. The more we can do collaboratively, the more the racism begins to break down. Signage for both churches. At same time, not trying to take over. We need each other.
- Community organizing principles for purpose of evangelism.
- Partner with other denominations to provide resources and programs for members. Don't be afraid to share!
- Each year, dozens of volunteers from schools. We see them as targets of church growth.
- See everyone as a partner in ministry, not just the priests. Need the lawyers, the doctors, the janitors, the teachers to plant a church.
- Location is key to doing effective ethnic ministry. Strategic.

Why successful?

- Energy and commitment off the charts.
- Building capacity, training leaders.
- We put the faith at the center of what we are doing. Not just social workers, teachers – we have the faith, a message to tell. Slogan: "You do your best, God will do the rest."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 06

MORNING

Preliminary Outline of Mid-Term Report: What do we have to say to our church?

What's the purpose of the church (our vision, grounded in Christ and in scripture)? What are we going to do (our plan)? What do we believe (our faith)? How do we treat one another (our values)?

Given decline, how will we act?

1. Research and reflection
 - a. Scenario exercises – releases paralysis, EC eventually writes a preferred scenario, identifies choices; staff then fills in details of plan, inc. timeline
 - b. High level meeting across mainline denominations, b/c decline is not just about TEC, but future of “generous-hearted” Christianity in U.S.
 - c. What we can offer (as reps and microcosm of our church):
 - i. Purpose
 - ii. Identity
 - iii. Evangelism
 - iv. Mission
 - d. Diocesan self-assessment process and tool
2. Choices
 - a. As result of scenario planning exercises
3. Planning
 - a. How will we know if it's working?
 - b. How will we measure and describe success?
 - c. Gather financial and human resources: major capital campaign
4. Action
5. Observe
6. Evaluate
7. Adjust and Repeat

What do we need to provide?

- Evangelism training for “generous-hearted Christians” – theology of evangelism
- Youth and young adult strategy
- Underserved communities strategy (the poor, people of color, etc.)
- Emerging leaders' strategy
 1. Identify
 2. Train
 3. Debt
 4. Mentor
- Build diocesan capacity to lead training and work around anti-racism and reconciliation
- Statement of purpose of church and unique gifts of particular denominational communities

General Reflections

• Presiding Leaders' Meeting?

- Lutherans 2x our size; Presbyterians about same (true?); Methodists 4x; UCC 1/3. Is it really necessary or useful to do this ecumenically? Will a high-level meeting actually distract us, sucking more energy than it adds? Does it shift the power and responsibility up to the PB and peers, when we need to be shifting it around to the people?
- Or would coming together give us a chance to share wisdom and energy, get our presiding leaders focused on addressing decline? Doesn't have to be high profile, front page news, just high level.
- Is just bringing them together enough? Will they still avoid the facts, w/o the energy of the ones who've really faced it? Bring together presiding leaders AND congregational development/evangelism gurus for each church (Charles F's crew).
- Best Practices AND Purpose, not just another best practices conference
- If we manage to do the scenario planning at EC, that would be new info to bring to a summit of presiding leaders.

- What's our responsibility? We can offer suggestions, guidance. Be sure to say that the point of scenario planning is to free people from fear, surface what we really want.

- Note: Jim Lemler has written a short piece on strategic planning (Charles or Ted will forward the web address).

• Church's Purpose

- To reach people, building relationship, in order to share Christ's message, the love of God. The other programs, goals, liberal agenda, are all means to THIS end. Saw it with Thomas Pang and Chinese Ministry. Grounded in love and presence of God, can go out into the world in some creative, edgy ways.
- Be sure we reflect on the experiences. What have we learned about church, about purpose?
- What a church! Breadth of expressions, all part of who we are. All part of reaching people for Christ.
- Jesus came into the world not to condemn, but to save in order that they might know God. Our goal is not to make anybody Episcopalian, but to make us all disciples of Jesus Christ.
- We can be the people of God in the places where God calls us to be. Labels don't matter. Come as you are.

• Commission process notes

- Good to have offline, informal conversations. Make sure all that richness comes back into larger group – trust group process. Make sure we have some time to process the experiences together, dig in and mine for gems.
- To what extent does this group run based on “old church” models – 8 am to 8 pm.

• General Convention process notes

- How do we make all this real to communities that are just living a particular reality?
- Imagine if GC were like this commission – light on legislation and parliamentary process, heavy on community and stories and genuine transformation. Community trumps ideology. Calling community out of reactive mode and into intentional mode. Either/or process is dead. Not “pass a resolution with me” but “abide with me.” Jesus never told his believers “agree with each other” but “love each other.”

- So how can we be evangelists for evangelism? Do a presentation that really kicks, dramatic, present scenarios instead of resolutions. Get Evangelism Committee on board, no resolutions. Get evangelism to be the topic of table worship groups.
- Is there ANY connection between GC and congregations? Except for some controversial issues, not much matters to folks on the ground. Can resolutions ever create passion? Need a structure, a wineskin, that invigorates passion. How can we help to shape GC so that the 1000 deputies and bishops can really talk about evangelism at the tables, in the corners? Tell stories of personal transformation in our worship, plenaries, bible studies. Small wins.
- Can't we say less is more? Lambeth is moving in that direction. Cut the workload to 50%. What else could we be doing? The most important thing we're doing is building community.
- Everyone who creates legislation should ask: "Does this have to come before this GC? (How deal with people who feel like "What do you mean, my resolution isn't necessary?"). Will debate and voting on this resolution really make a difference?" Note: a few trienniums ago, reduced the load. How did they do it? Dispatch may have to be scrupulous re: business that actually gets to the floor. Once a resolution is sent to committee, a body has to act on it. Have to report it out: no action, tabled, etc. Last GC, so much unfinished business. Let's be realistic about what can actually get done.
- Where is God in the legislative process? "I sent you my Son, not a convention." Need a revolution. Let's submit no resolutions. Quite possible that the committees are wanting to have the conversation, not to work on resolutions (like us).
- Goal: Reduce resolutions load by ½. Emphasize stories, transformation and community.
 1. Need to build relationships and heal.
 2. Need to get serious about decline, transformation.
 3. Need to actually present a reasonable workload, realistic about what we can get done.
 4. Need to open space for greater, more inclusive participation – small groups, plenaries based on stories.
 5. Need to facilitate translation, slow down the process.

Five groups w/ power that we could approach and argue for 50% reduction in workload.

- Jim: House of Bishops
- Lallie: Greg Straub and CCAB chairs
- Ted: Executive Council
- Colenzo: Bonnie Anderson and CCAB liaisons
- Charles: 815 Staff

- **Change name of our commission to Commission for Mission and Evangelism**

- Not "Domestic". "Internal"? Also notice that the content and focus have to change, not just the name. Next triennium, meet in Puerto Rico.
- Note: Bonnie looking into increasing amount of money that Commissions have to spend.

- **The Numbers Game**

- How do we measure success and growth? Parochial report design? Responsibility of State of the Church. What data do we need to make judgments?

- See Fast Facts. Does not include Province 9. Couldn't compare data over 8 years b/c Province changed during that period. Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Columbia all grew in members and average Sunday attendance.
- Need to get numbers in much, much faster.

Outcomes for Los Angeles

- Multicultural ministries, inc. Latino and indigenous people (speak with Janine Tinsley Rowe, Indigenous Ministry)
- Reconciliation work
- Work on Mid-triennium report
- Theology of evangelism for all of us
- Note: Start sessions at 9 am rather than 8?

Closing prayer from group. Meeting dismissed at 11:20 a.m.

Minutes submitted by The Rev. Stephanie Spellers

sspellers@diomass.org

617.482.4826, x318