

Minutes: Lifelong Christian Education and Formation Commission
Conference call: 3 p.m. EST February 24, 2007

Present:

RC Laird
Valerie Bailey Fischer
Keane J. Keanuenu
Thom Chu
The Rt. Rev. Carolyn Irish
The Rev. Eddie Blue
Sarah Eagle Heart-Cuny
Wayne Floyd
Iris Harris
Ruth Ann Collins
The Rev. Mary Stoddard Trainor
Hisako Miyazaki
Scott Evenbeck
Sandy Webb

Absent

The Rev. Thomas Gehlsen
The Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor
The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley

Introductions:

Thom introduced Ruth Ann Collins during the conference call. Ruth-Ann Collins joined Ministries with Young People on February 12 as national staff officer for Children's Ministries and Christian Education at the Episcopal Church Center in New York City. She has been active with the National Association for Episcopal Christian Education Directors (ECHE). (rcollins@episcopalchurch.org)

Update: Summer 2010

Leadership for Education and Formation – A Joint conference between LCEF, Ministry Development and PEALL.

Agenda for this meeting, as set in November 2006:

Theological Reflection on Formation
Annotated Resources List
Developing the Vision Statement (June)
Reviewing Call to Teach and Learn

Future Meetings

2007 Meetings:
Next meeting:

June 20-23, 2007
Cathedral College, Washington, DC

Nov 14-18, 2007 (with Ministry Development)
Dominican Republic

2008 Meetings

Teleconferencing meeting
Saturday, Feb 23, 2008
3 p.m. EST

June 18-21, 2008
Salt Lake City, UT

Teleconferencing meeting
Oct 11, 2008
3 p.m.

Tentative meetings with Ministry Development (attended by a few members of the commission)

March 21-24, 2007, Scottsdale, AZ

August 19-22, 2007, Memphis TN

Conversation on Call to Teach and Learn

Commission members' reviews on "Call to Teach and Learn" (CTL) were very positive. Iris said she read it over and over and thought it was wonderful. She wondered why the church had not used CTL more. Bishop Irish was amazed that CTL was still very current, although it had been published in 1994. RC said he appreciated the document and wondered how it could be made more useful for those who are engaged in the work of Christian Formation. RC also wondered about how to make CTL available to a larger number of people. Thom said that CTL provides the framework for the church's work in Christian Formation.

CTL raised questions for some commissioners. Mary said that CTL assumes that Christian Education is a priority, however, in reality, most people don't attend Sunday School and most children don't have access to a developed Sunday School program. Wayne said that CTL uses the language of "catechesis," rather than the language for "life long learning." Perhaps, Wayne said, people see the language of catechesis and assume that Christian Formation is only preparation for baptism (or confirmation). Eddie said that part of the committee's task might be to more broadly disseminate CTL. However, Eddie said, that the committee should not move forward on wider dissemination before doing wider research on how CTL has already been, or is being used.

Several (Mary, Eddie and Thom) recommended that new staff at the National Church Center assess how CTL has been used and then the commission would make recommendations based on their assessment.

Bishop Irish said that clergy, as well as Christian Educators should be targeted for the assessment of CTL. Clergy are expected to also be educators, she said. Bishop Irish said that she has observed that nothing happens in terms of advancement for education in the congregations unless clergy are supportive.

Concerns:

- Mary – Dominican Republic location in terms of mission opportunities and social justice for workers in the DR
- Iris – intellectual clergy often cannot communicate in ways that are accessible to a wider variety of people, many of whom are not intellectuals.
- Sarah – Christian Education materials are not being accessible to many ethnic minorities communities either due to cost or existence not widely communicated. The existing cultural Christian Education materials need to be converted to PDF file format to combat cost issues.
- Sandy reminded the commission members that policy crafting, the role of the committee, is different from carrying out the policy. The Standing Commission is not in a position to instruct church staff, it is in a position to tell General Convention that the church needs to do x, y and z.

Action items:

Christian Education survey results will be distributed.

Search for “Best Practices” -- What are Christian Education and Formation best practices in use at this time. Best practices should be sought from among lay Christian Educators and clergy.

Starting online conversations about best practices – and the hows and whats of how these best practices are practiced.

Best Practices: Each commission member email a half page on a Best Practice that they have seen used in their parishes or communities.

Valerie Bailey Fischer

Secretary

Tuesday, April 17, 2007