

Task Force to Coordinate Ecumenical and Interreligious Work
March 5, 2019
Zoom meeting

MEMBERS AND STAFF PRESENT: Eugene Sutton; David Simmons; Jaime Briceño; Sharon Alexander; Walter Baer; Scott Hayashi; Kate Bellam; Bill Franklin, chair; Denise Yarbrough, Vice Chair; Lucinda Mosher, Technology Officer; Marisa Tabizon Thompson, Secretary; Margaret Rose; Richard Mammana; Chuck Robertson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Luz Montes

OPENING AND AGENDA: The meeting opened in prayer by Margaret Rose, during which she noted that we are holding the UMC in prayer. Lucinda Mosher moved that we approve the minutes as posted from the meeting on January 29, 2019. Jaime seconded the motion. Bill Franklin then explained the agenda for this meeting as falling into two sections: history and intentions, and organization/subcommittees.

HISTORY AND INTENTIONS: Bill Franklin, Margaret Rose, and Richard Mammana led us through some of the history and background of official TEC ecumenical and interreligious work, stressing that an early and continued goal of the church is to be a leader in ecumenical work. The philosophy is that we build bridges in the church to build bridges in the world.

Full communion agreements are based on the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888, in which four requirements are necessary:

1. The Holy Scriptures are the revealed Word of God
2. The Nicene Creed is a sufficient statement of Christian faith
3. There are two sacraments – Baptism and Communion
4. The Historic Episcopate (as locally adapted)

There are several points in our denominational history during which we looked at unification with other denominations, such as the 1853 Committee on Church Unity, the 1908 National Council of Churches, and attempts in the 1880s and 1940s with the Presbyterians.

We currently have a handful of different kinds of agreements with other denominations which we discussed: Interim Eucharistic Sharing, Full Communion, etc.

Interreligious work – There have been advisory groups and subcommittees over the years on large issues as well as specific relationships such as the Jewish community, Sikhs, etc. Lucinda Mosher has a long and deep experience in this area, including a published book (details in the resource section of the minutes).

Please note the documents on the extranet prepared on history and the current state of ecumenical and interreligious work in The Episcopal Church.

SUBCOMMITTEES: Four subcommittees/working groups were then suggested for future organization and work. Full detail is found in the related document on the extranet. The working groups are:

1. General Convention, structure, and governance
2. Theology work
3. United Methodist Church and other bi-lateral discussions (full communion and not)

4. Anglican Communion, the Convocation of Churches in Europe, and related

The conversation was then opened to all present for comment and reflection.

Q. Should the first two committees be combined?

A. It is anticipated that the boundaries will be fluid and things will overlap.

Q. Should there be an interreligious subcommittee – even of two people – that could help staff and respond to issues and requests for statements?

A. That might be good to add to the theology group.

Q. Europe is important. Can we put necessary resources/people on that work?

A. Yes.

Q. What about the Roman Catholic dialogue? And how does a dialogue start?

A. That goes under the UMC/bilateral committee.

Committee assignments/Requests:

General Convention

David Simmons

Sharon Alexander

Marisa Tabizon Thompson

Theology

Denise Yarbrough

Lucinda Mosher

Marisa Tabizon Thompson

UMC/Bilateral Work

Sharon Alexander

David Simmons

Denise Yarbrough

Scott Hayashi

Kate Bellam

Walter Baer

Anglican Communion and Europe

Lucinda Mosher

Walter Baer

Eugene Sutton

Jaime Briceño

Additionally, Sharon volunteers for anything messy, and Margaret, Chuck, Richard, and Bill anticipate floating in and out of the groups.

ORGANIZING FOR GOING FORWARD:

There are two options for further work. We can alternate monthly on the whole group meeting vs committee meetings or we can have the committees meet monthly and the whole group come together quarterly. It is thought, at this time, that we look to staff to assign tasks, which will dictate the frequency and immediacy of subcommittee meetings. Additionally, we are to filter questions, issues, and concerns through/to staff.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND REFERENCES:

Hungarian Reformed Church in America:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian_Reformed_Church_in_America

<http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/misc/nanassy1922.pdf>

Anglican/Presbyterian Dialogue: http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/misc/presbyterian_episcopal1896.pdf

Toward Our Mutual Flourishing by Lucinda Mosher:

<https://www.peterlang.com/abstract/title/22143?rskey=CGbcNL&result=2>

EMM – Episcopal Migration Ministries

EDEIO – Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Religious Officers

Methodist-Episcopal dialogue and resources: <http://umc-tec.org>

Anglican-Roman Catholic Theological Consultation in the USA (ARCUSA): <http://archusa.church>

Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee: <http://lutheran-episcopal.org>

Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee: <http://moravian-episcopal.org>